PEN OWEN.

VOL. III.

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PEN OWEN.

THREE VOLUMES.

WHY SO! — THIS GALLANT WILL COMMAND THE SUN!

VOL. III.

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MDCCCXXII.

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CHAPTER

It may so happen, that certain of my readers, who have indulged themselves in the habit of reading novels and romances, (a habit never sufficiently to be deprecated,) may have been led into an error respecting the nature of our present history, and the character of the work altogether. No author, however unambitious, is disposed to sit down patiently under imputations which in conscious pride he feels to be unmerited; and there is no cause, amidst the multitude which are said to operate upon the nerves of writers in general, which seems to me to be of so uniformly irritating a nature, as the possible inference that they are professed novelists or romancers.

We might, indeed, as a sort of healing plaister to the wounds of these sensitive patients, take upon us to derive works of this order, from sources of high antiquity; but the gentlemen (and ladies too) of whom I am speaking, would be as little inclined to condescend, I suspect, to measure their talents with an old Greek, or the more modern Troubadour or Trouveur, as with the professed pensioners of the Leadenhall Street Minerva.

That I may not be supposed to make gratuitous assertions, for the purpose of better substantiating my own claims, I beg to refer my kind readers (who will no doubt be ready and willing to obey the injunction) to send to their booksellers for fifty or sixty out of the number of those histories annually bestowed upon the public, which, by a vulgar and erroneous classification, are known, for want of a better, under generic term of novels. They will then have further goodness to turn to each work separately, and if they do not find, either in the introductory proema, or preface, or in the body as regular a protest as was ever recorded "Lords' Journals," against all novels and ces, as well as all novelists and romance

writers, I am content to forego the rank which this very argument is intended to determine and establish in my favour.

I do not mean to affirm that the same form of words is always preserved; my Lord Duke and the Marquess of—— do not express their dissent with the same forceful energy of expression against an act of ordinary legislation, as against those which are avowedly carried in their sheer despite, by corrupt or incapable ministers who sit opposite to them. Neither in the house of literary Peers (for no author is expected to acknowledge a superior) do the dissentient members preserve the same form or measure in their protests? but, according to circumstances, and the degree in which their own interests seem likely to be affected by the question, a necessary variation is always observable. For example, (not that I mean to quote literally, *that* is the reader's business,) if a heroine is necessarily for the better conduct of the plot to be guilty of any peccadillo or offence against the decencies of life, we are sure to be informed, that "her mind had been early contaminated by the trash of a circulating library." When a parent, who is to be represented as

a pattern-system-monger, exhibits his whole stock of the author's reading, he is made sedulously to warn his inexperienced ward, pupil, or daughter against those "thumbed, and dog-eared vehicles of corruption and nonsense, those pests in the world of letters, called novels." If a youth, in supporting the character assigned to him, is caught rambling by moonlight, or writing sonnets "to his mistress' eye-brow," an apology is at hand, in due form, to show that his youthful mind had been poisoned by reading romances to a blind grandmother or superannuated aunt; and should any thing monstrous and unnatural call up the author to explain, he corroborates the fact by an assurance, that, improbable as it may appear to the inexperienced reader, real life produces as many wonderful coincidences and marvellous adventures, as even the distempered imagination of a mere romance-writer could suggest.

Thus do they throw off, to the greatest possible distance, all connexion and affinity with a class of writers, who, after all, appear, from their own theory, to have no real existence, except in the obsolete instances of Smollett, Fielding, "*et hoc Genus omne*" of

scriblers, who were not ashamed to avow their vocation, and even seem to have gloried in the degrading title of novelists.

The great evil, which appears indeed to be irremediable under existing circumstances, is, that the public, in spite of all their protests, do most unfeelingly persevere in calling every work, published under a particular form, by this odious and proscribed name, and until some legal penalty be devised, I confess, I do not at this moment perceive how it can well be remedied.

The reviews to be sure might do something towards this desirable end, but the want of discretion in this department has frequently occasioned more harm than good; for we have more instances than one (by a venial, *certainly not* a venal, error of the press) of the review having preceded the work in its appearance before the public, and the style of the one being so identified with the other, as to awaken the suspicions even of a public in general good-naturedly disposed to keep their eyes shut, whilst the conjuror arranges his cups and balls for their amusement; but —

"In pertusum ingerimus dicta, dolium!"

What I desire my readers to infer from all that has been said above, is, that I am no more disposed to submit to the degradation of imputed novelism, than my neighbours and fellow-labourers in this one particular department of literary exercitation. That we are not to be thus ranked is demonstrable; for it can scarcely be supposed that we should employ our pens for the suicidal purpose of undermining our new productions, or holding up our beacon-lights, as the "Society for the Suppression of Vice" do their lanterns, to show that we are the receptacles of all that is vile, seductive, and corrupting. This is conclusive, and must undeceive the most bigotted and least enlightened among those who have hitherto persevered in so gross and obvious an error.

My readers, therefore, must not suppose themselves at liberty to fidget and fret because *this* incident is not explained, or *that* apparent contradiction reconciled to their own peculiar views of the subject. They must take things as they come, and as they actually occurred in the history of our hero; who, by the bye, is no hero, and ought never to have been so designated, but from a barbarous custom de-

scended from the very persons who have tended to fix the blot upon us, which is now, I trust, for ever expunged from our escutcheon.

At the same time, I wish it to be fully understood, that although my first duty is to execute the office entrusted, (together with all the MSS., letters, genealogies, and other such appendages afforded to the biographers of great men,) by the representatives of a most distinguished and antient family; and although I think it due to myself, that the public should be aware that I am in no way dependant upon their frowns or smiles for the comforts and enjoyments of my attic elysium, I am not altogether of that unsociable class of beings who boast their own independence, merely for the purpose of rendering others dependent upon them.

I beg leave, therefore, to assure my readers, male and female, gentle as well as simple, that full and ample satisfaction shall hereafter be given, touching all points which appear at present to be involved in obscurity; and that, if I forbear lifting the veil until we are somewhat further advanced, it is simply for the benefit of those whom it may concern; that is, of those who have bribed me to place the subject of this history in as interesting a point of

view as the materials they have furnished me with will admit; and of those also, who might, perhaps, be tempted to lose a fund of entertainment and instruction in the perusal, if something in prospective expectation were not held out to encourage their perseverance. I will endeavour to illustrate this by an anecdote.

A certain well-known person, a barrister by profession, and a wit by calling, during the western circuit, having a leisure day, (a very rare circumstance with a young practitioner,) crossed the country to pay a visit to an old family connection, whom he had not seen for several years. The country cousin had retired from public life, after having taken a very active share, in voting at least, upon all party questions for six successive parliaments, during which he had sat as member for the county. The lawyer found him in his study reading to his wife; and a more happy domestic scene of connubial congeniality of tastes and pursuits had rarely presented itself to his view.

After the salutations usual upon such occasions, but more warm and sincere than they are upon many, the visitor enquired of his host, the subject of his studies.—"Hume!" answered the retired politician, stoutly.—

"What!" returned the other, "growing sceptical, my good sir, in your old age?"—"Sceptical!" returned the other; "God forgive you! No! we are reading his history."—"Good," observed the barrister, "we are never too old to learn."—"True! true!" replied the ex-member; "I never was more amused in my life."—"Whereabouts are you?" asked the lawyer.—"Just, coming into the revolution," answered, in a duetto, the gentleman and his spouse.—"Well, then, you will trace all those important principles to their source," (the lawyer was growing eloquent), "all those axioms upon which the stable foundation of the rights and liberties—"—"Hush! hush!" exclaimed the agitated squire, starting upon his legs, and placing his hands on the barrister's mouth, "not a word more—not a syllable, my good friend; if you tell us what is coming, there is an end of all the interest!!!"

Although I defy any facetious lawyer of them all to spoil your interest, my gentle readers, by anticipating a tittle of the history of Pen Owen through its many revolutions, yet, as the staff is now in your own hands, and if I digress much longer, you may be guilty of skipping, merely to show your independence, I will at

once proceed to draw up the curtain on my third act.

At the close of the second, it will be recollected, we left our hero in a state of some perplexity, increased by that sort of indecision which is generated in the human mind, when operated upon and influenced by two opposed and contending motives to action. His life perhaps depended upon his immediate flight from London; his life appeared to him to be not worth preserving out of London. A nice casuist or a lawyer might, after much sifting, and consulting, and referring, have proposed a middle term; but necessity, which they say has *no law*, but is known to be the mother of invention, arrived at the same point by a nearer road; and young Wettenhall, who perceived the urgency of an immediate decision, proposed the expedient of retreating to some obscure lodging in the skirts or neighbourhood of town.

"The skirts, if you please," cried Pen; "no further!" To the skirts, therefore, they directed the hackney coachman, after having properly muffled their persons, so as to escape detection. They drove first to Islington; but Pen checked the driver, and swore he would not be dragged to such a distance from London.

A compromise was again entered into with his companion, and a lodging in an obscure court between Islington and Clerkenwell at length found, which appeared to answer all the purposes for which it was chosen. It was situated in a paved court, to which there was access from two or three neighbouring streets, and the accommodation, if not such as suited with the notions of a Bond-Street lounger, was at least sufficiently comfortable to be the asylum of even a dandy—in danger.

Having arranged this point, and settled terms with the landlady, it was agreed that Pen should not rashly expose his person to observation; that he should take his necessary exercise when other folks generally return from theirs; and that he should change his hat with an invisible brim for one that should possess the merit of the original invention, to shade his face and eyes. He was to assume a silk handkerchief in place of his usual neck appendages, and wrap himself up in the folds and capes of a box great-coat, which Wettenhall lent him for the purpose. To all these conditions Pen subscribed without a dissentient shrug—for, in truth, he was thinking of something else, and his aid-de-

camp departed to gain intelligence from the enemy's camp, and to ascertain the state of the wounded.

It may appear strange that Wettenhall should openly risk his own safety, whilst he had so providently catered for that of his friend; as the seconds upon these occasions are regarded in pretty nearly the same light as the principals in the eye of the law; but Wettenhall was fully as well acquainted with Pen Owen as the reader, and I leave it to him to judge whether he did not decide wisely in leaving our hero in a fortified station, whilst he scoured the country.

Our hero was too much agitated, and bewildered by all that had recently occurred, to think of leaving his retreat that evening; he pondered, he fretted, he raved, he wrote, he dosed, he read. His landlady, according to the terms prescribed, produced at a certain hour a greasy mutton steak, at which his stomach revolted, and he reverted to the savoury steams of his favourite coffee-room. There he met again Major Irwine, — thence he was transferred to the Major's house, — again he heard the mysterious injunctions; then followed, in regular

thinks, the whole concatenation of circumstances which brought Ellice Craig, and her unaccountable conduct, in array before him.

When his hostess appeared to carry off her untouched specimen of domestic cookery, he was in the act of transferring various moveables, from their several appropriate positions in the apartment, with more haste than attention to their uses, and had actually dashed upon the hearth a large vase, not of Grecian or Etruscan origin, but of painted glass, and valued by our landlady as much as if it had actually been produced from the excavations of Herculaneum or Pompeii.

She stared with horror at her lodger. He, recalled to his senses by the presence of a stranger, was equally shocked at being detected in a paroxysm, which he at once felt was not to be explained to a person of this description. He therefore affected to be mightily concerned for what had happened; chucked several times— (the reader understands me without the aid of Johnson), and, stooping to collect the fragments, seemed to be earnestly intent upon discovering some mode of remedying the injury.

The good woman had been invited up stairs by the clatter of chairs, tables, and other

hitherto unapplied missiles shifting their quarters somewhat more abruptly than is usual, and particularly by an outrageous expression of wrath and indignation, which was straightway followed by the smash of her favourite ornament.

His assumed composure did not therefore impose upon her as intended, and the mysterious circumstances under which a gentleman of his appearance had taken up his abode with her, led to suspicions which she had not time to follow up to any definite conclusion, although they halted only between the alternative of her having housed a madman, or one who was flying from the officers of justice for some high and flagrant delinquency which hung feverishly about his conscience. When, therefore, he expressed his regret at the accident which had happened, and requested, in his mildest tone, that another might be provided at his expence, she perceived the necessity of withholding for the present any expression of her suspicions, however she might hereafter be induced to act upon them.

Joining therefore in the regret so handsomely expressed, she only added her fear, that "such a beauty was not likely to be found soon again for love nur money;" but she would do

her best to satisfy his honour." She now carried off the dinner-tray, without observing the bad compliment paid to her culinary exertions, her eyes and attention having been fully occupied in alternately looking at the still-agitated countenance of her lodger, and the various articles of her *tidy* household, which lay scattered about the apartment.

Early the next morning, Wettenhall appeared with a countenance that bespoke him the bearer of no very agreeable tidings. He told our hero, that Lord Killcullane was given over by his medical attendants, and that the most fatal consequences might ensue to him, if he remained any longer in the country. Pen was in despair, not,—to his credit be it spoken,—on account of the perilous situation in which he found himself placed, but from the deep remorse and contrition he felt in being the murderer of a fellow-being, whom he knew only to destroy. All the cold reasoning and calculations, arising out of his personal danger, were rejected with contempt; he rather would fly to the injured father, and resign himself into the hands of justice, as the price of pardon from the dying victim of his precipitation.

Wettenhall found it vain to contend with a man who held life to be a secondary consideration, and who never suffered his passions to capitulate to reason, when they had obtained full possession of the citadel. He, therefore, shifted the conversation, and, by degrees, found an opportunity of communicating his own intentions upon this trying occasion.

"I presume not, my good friend," said he, addressing Pen, "to dictate to you the line of conduct necessary in this emergency; your own good sense will, I have no doubt, suggest what is most proper and expedient."—

"Most conducive to peace of mind," interrupted Pen; "if any thing can conduce to it."

"Be it so; you will judge of all this better than I can do; but I am compelled to act for myself, and must take those precautions which—"

"Take any you please," exclaimed our hero, "so that I am not included in them."

"Nay, but, my good sir, listen to me. It is painful—grievous to me, to part from you; and yet, as the heir of Sir Luke Oldysworth—"

"The heir!—what then?"

"It would not become me to submit to the indignity of being hurried to prison as a felon."

"As a felon!"

"As the accomplice in a murder,—such the law of the land, in spite of the law of honour, holds our crime."

"And so it ought, sir; the law is a good law, and should be enforced. What right have I—or you—or any wretch, blinded by selfish notions of a spurious honour, to make widows and orphans at our pleasure?"

"Nay,—sir, this is a hard lecture to me, who, you will recollect, was an unwilling witness of your—"

"True—true," (shaking his companion's hand,) "you had nothing to do with it: it was my own precipitation and folly, and that cursed Irishman. I'm to blame. Pardon, pardon a distracted wretch, who knows scarcely what he says or does, and has nothing in life worth the tenure"—

"Say not so, my good friend; better days may come; Lord Killcullane may recover, in spite of the medical prognostics. Ellice Craig may be found; your friends be reconciled; and

a short time dispel every cloud that seems to hang so heavy and gloomily around you."

"Why then should I fly?—No, no! I will abide my fate."

"Do so; but still be prudent: keep entirely within doors:—do not write to your friends at present. I shall endeavour to make my way to Bristol, where I will see and explain every thing respecting your conduct to them, before I embark for some foreign shore, which may be necessary until this storm has blown over."

"You mean to fly, then."

"What would you have me do? I may at this moment have been traced to your lodgings. My own I have discharged, and deposited my portmanteau at a coach-office in the city, as I came hither, thinking a public conveyance the least likely to attract notice."

"You could not have done better. Why should I involve you in my misfortunes? Go, my friend,—deeply, deeply, do I regret having hurried you into this scrape. Still *you* are heart whole; your conscience is not oppressed." Pen sighed deeply; and Wettenhall, seizing the opportunity of his mind being thus softened

and subdued, re-urged the necessity of precaution. A plan was settled, by which it was hoped all discovery might be avoided, until the fate of Lord Killcullane should be decided. Pen, however, resolved to stand his trial, and only listened to the suggestions of prudence, so far, as to avoid the inconvenience he had before experienced, of imprisonment, at a moment, when he considered his liberty necessary to gain tidings of Ellice Craig.

Our hero, whom the reader will not be disposed to tax with any extraordinary exertion of the noble talent of foresight or precaution, had parted with Frank Wettenhall, without ever once reverting to the state of his finances. They were now reduced to a very few shillings, which he had rattled in his breeches pocket during the greater part of his late conversation. Wettenhall, who possessed somewhat more prudence and recollection, returned to ask him what he intended to do, in order to replenish his exhausted store. Pen answered, in a careless tone, — "I suppose I must write something." To this Wettenhall offered a few observations, respecting the necessity of ready money in his present obscurity, the time necessary for

such an exercise of the mind, and the present perturbed state of the Exchequer, upon which he proposed to draw. He regretted that he had scarcely sufficient to carry him down to Bristol; but suddenly recollecting himself, he took leave of his companion, by assuring him, he would send a person to him, who had more than once accommodated him with small loans; and would anticipate any security he might require for the supply of Pen's emergencies. Pen, with tears in his eyes, embraced his generous and provident friend; and having torn himself from him, threw himself into a chair, and gave vent to his feelings aloud; among which, none of the weakest seemed to arise out of the narrow suspicions he had been induced to harbour respecting the character and conduct of the only man who had thus stood forward his protector and benefactor in the hour of need.

Our hero had discharged his servant before he left Wettenhall's lodgings; and, according to the plan originally agreed upon, had assumed the name of Mr. John Brown; which, it was conceived, might pass current without notice amongst the crowd of John Browns, who, no

doubt, pursued their honest and dishonest vocations in the city and suburbs of the great metropolis.

In the course of the morning, a person was ushered into our hero's apartment, who, stating that he came at the request of Mr. Francis Wattenhall, was invited to take a seat; and Pen being wholly unacquainted with the forms of business, paused for the stranger to open the budget. After several preparatory hems, Mr. Snell (for that proved to be the gentleman's name,) presumed, that Mr. Brown had occasion for a loan.

"A trifle, sir," answered Pen.

"Hem!"

"Fifty pounds will be sufficient for the present."

"Fifty pounds! Mr. Brown."

"I am not —"

"Sir!"

"I beg your pardon! I am — go on, sir;" and Pen having checked his predominant disposition to ingenuousness — assumed an air, more fitted to the business in hand.

"Fifty pounds! Mr. Brown," observed the money-lender, "is——"

"Is what, sir."

"Is fifty pounds, Mr. Brown—a large sum; and as times go—"

"Psha, sir! What is it to you? Your money will be paid shortly."

"So say all borrowers, Mr. Brown."

"Mr. ——— Devil!—'Sblood, sir! do you think I would deceive you? Put down the money, sir, without more prosing."

"Put down the money!—Mr. Brown!—"

"Why, Mr. Brown, at every time, sir!—"

"Why, Mr. Brown—"

"Again, I tell you, sir, Mr. ——"

"Snell, at your service!"

"If you are at my service, Mr. Snell, deposit the money, and leave me; for I am not in a humour to converse, or discuss questions with you."

"Well, Mr. Brown, I must own, you are a most original borrower."

"Sir! I never borrowed before, and never mean to borrow again; so produce the money, and decamp."

"Suppose, Mr. Brown, I have not the money to lend."

"If I supposed that, sir,—I should show you the shortest way into the street!"

"Sir!"

"Come, come! no words! You can have no possible business with me but as a money-lender; and cannot be a money lender without money: so produce, sir, or leave the room."

"You are really so abrupt, Mr. Brown!—"

"I am really so determined, Mr. Snell, that I will not be troubled with another word. Have you, or have you not the money!"

"I certainly have the money."

"Then, deliver it."

"Deliver it, Mr. Brown!—I don't understand you."

"By heaven's, man, I'll wring it from you, [illegible]—"

"[illegible]!—Why, you would not rob me?"

"Rob you, scoundrel! what do you take me for?"

"Take you for, Mr. Brown! why the deuce take me if I know;" but perceiving our hero rising in his indignation, he lowered in his tone; and it is to be inferred, that having Wettenhall's security, he did not feel disposed to resent a conduct to which probably in the usual routine

of his business he was not much accustomed. Producing, therefore, from his side-pocket a capacious leathern accompt-book, he drew out of it notes to the amount of the sum required, minus only five pounds, which, he observed to Pen, was the usual fee upon such occasions. Under the form of a fee, Pen's notions of injustice or suspicion of usury, if he had any upon the subject, were effectually suppressed, and filling up a note of hand prescribed by the money-lender, dashed off the signature of PENDARVES OWEN at the bottom! — and threw it across the table.

"Sir!" exclaimed the astonished Mr. Snell.

"What's further to be done, sir," demanded Pen.

"Your signature, Mr. Brown."

"You have it, sir, — what would you more?"

"Pendarves Owen!" cried the man.

"Well, sir,"

"I must have your own signature, Mr. Brown; I know nothing of *this* Pendarvès Owen."

"*This* who, sirrah?"

"Why — this name you signed to the note. I know Mr. Wettenhall, and I know Mr. Brown; but who is Pendarves —?"

Our hero here interrupted his visitor; and I verily believe it was entirely owing to an accidental pause of reflection, — very unusual when he was forming a resolution, — that intervened, which saved the unfortunate Mr. Snell from either being taken by the nose like St. Dunstan, or kicked down the stairs like the complaining lover in the song.

He had entirely forgotten that he was Mr. Brown, although so repeatedly, and to him so offensively, reminded of it by his companion; and any reflection upon the family name we know was not to be tolerated by the blood of the Cwm Owen Owens. — Fortunately, however, that of Brown was repeated just as he was in the act of rising from his chair, for the purpose of maintaining his family dignity, and struck his ear and recollection in time, to save himself from a very ridiculous piece of bravado, and the usurer from a practical joke, of which his simultaneous retreat from the table indicated his apprehensions.

Pen, therefore, dropping his extended arm, by a very ingenious manœuvre, contrived to make it just descend upon the note of hand, which, taking up, he affected to smile at his mistake, although all his indignation was trans-

ferred from his intended victim to himself, for having condescended, under any circumstances, to assume a false name. He disdained to add to the subterfuge by any further mummery, but hastily erasing his real signature, wrote John Brown, without saying a word further to the staring money-lender, who appeared to be as well satisfied by his silent dismissal in a whole skin, as Pen was to find himself again alone, and unmolested by the matter of fact transactions of a mercenary world.

In a few minutes he had as utterly forgotten the money-lender as the money which lay upon the table, where it had been deposited, and pacing his chamber with quick and hurried steps, was soon lost in reveries, which, if it were not for the lowness of the comparison, we should liken unto the nature of a certain compound beverage, which I trust may escape the purifying hands of radical reform, when pruning patriots have settled other matters to their satisfaction in our good old town of Glasgow.—It must, however, be confessed, if I am to speak as a connoisseur on this head, that the acid was infinitely too predominant over the sweet, to afford our hero all the advantages of the mixture. But if we again

consider how powerful a sweetener a sanguine temperament of mind is to its possessor, we shall not be surprised, that in about three hours after the departure of Mr. Snell, Pen Owen found himself sufficiently composed to recollect that, as he had taken no dinner the preceding day, it would be an act of justice to all parties concerned, to secure himself against a similar disappointment on this.

Perhaps he might not have arrived at the latter conclusion so soon, by half an hour, or more, had not his landlady, who now entered the room, brought the reflection of the kitchen fire on her face, and with it the reminiscence of her handy work on the previous day; this reduced him to the necessity of an immediate resolution. He very civilly, for he would not have wounded her feelings for the world, informed his hostess, that he should not dine at home; and followed up the information, with inquiries upon a subject which seemed to have a much stronger hold upon his mind.

He said, he had some advertisements to send to the newspaper-offices in the neighbourhood of the Strand; and asked her whether there was any confidential person in the house who might be trusted with the commission. The good

lady, who perceived the table strewed like a banker's counter, with notes of various denominations, was happy to turn her talents to any account, by which some of these might become lawfully her property; and therefore immediately suggested, that people must be paid for their time; that the Strand was at a great distance; and that if people were taken off their work —

"Enough, enough, good woman," cried Pen; "get me a trusty messenger, and the deuce take the expense."—

"Bless your Honour!" exclaimed the landlady, dropping her best courtesey, and hurrying out of the room, lest she should betray her contemptuous joy, or joyful contempt, which ever the reader pleases, for a young scape-grace, who, with the obvious means of incurring it, cared not for the expense of gratifying his wishes.

It will be perceived, that the result of the late deliberation upon the mind of our unfortunate hero, was the renewal of his advertising plan; and as it was evident, Ellice Craig had seen, because she had answered his last communication, he sat down to word his appeal to her justice, and her plighted love, in as strong a

manner as could possibly be adopted in a public correspondence by initials. When he was satisfied with the production, he rang his bell, and demanding of his landlady whether she had secured a proper person, she called down the stairs for "Phil, Phil."

Her summons was answered in the person of a young man, who entered the apartment taking off a leathern apron, and pulling down his shirt sleeves, and had evidently been called off from mending or making shoes. With an intelligent countenance, he declared himself ready to go on any errand his Honour might desire.

Pen immediately entered into the details of his commission, gave the man three separate notes, for as many of the Morning Journals, bidding him pay what was demanded for prompt insertion, and to take a guinea for his trouble out of the five-pound note which he also put into his hand. The cobler looked astounded, but quickly recovering himself, and aided by a significant turn of the landlady's eye, who called him "Nevey" — he made a very graceful scrape, which was intended to shew his breeding — and, "hoped his Honour would consider the distance — and the sponsability."

"Have I not?" cried Pen, impatiently.

"Yes, to be sure, your Honour; but you see your Honour, I'se taken off my work in the flush, as a body may say, — and an old customer —"

"Well, well," — cried Pen, "what would you have? Pay yourself — see that the thing is done, that's all; see that —"

"Oh, I'll see to all that, Is'e warrant," cried the almost grinning son of Crispin.

"Yes, yes," re-echoed the landlady. "I'll ensure he does all that."

Pen motioned them to depart; and had he been of a prying, or a curious, or even like many persons as well born and bred as himself, of a more ordinary make of mind, such as is merely attentive to what is going forward round about it, he might have overheard something like a giggle on the stairs, that could not be wholly suppressed; and the loud slam of a door below stairs, which, from the peculiar crash that accompanied it, and certain sounds that followed it, any indifferent person would have sworn, must have been the operation of persons who, unable longer to contain themselves, found it necessary to retire for the purpose of giving vent to some pent-up feeling

of the mind. Whether, on the present occasion, this arose from a too acute sense of grief, or too coarse a tendency to laughter, must be left to the imagination of the reader, who witnessed the grave demeanour of Pen Owen in entrusting honest Crispin, my landlady's "Nevey," with his commission.

CHAPTER II.

PEN, whose appetite by this time had begun seriously to remonstrate against any further delay, determined to set forth on a voyage of discovery; and well knowing that the city of London was as famous for its viands, if not for its distribution of them, as the city of Westminster, he doubted not he should easily find some coffee-house, where he might satisfy an appetite which had increased upon a two-days' fast. It was nearly dusk, but he recollected, for once, that in entering a public coffee-room, he should find light enough to be discovered, if any one should be upon the look out for him. He, therefore, adopted the style of dress prepared for him, by the prudent foresight of his friend Wettenhall.

He passed through several streets, without the least previous knowledge of them, and found

himself at length in a large market-place, which after a laugh at his ignorance, from some self-sufficient cockney, he learned was Smithfield. This brought to his recollection, the unfortunate Mrs. Weston, who had attended him in Newgate, and whose affecting tale had repeatedly occurred to his mind, and as frequently induced the resolution of finding her out, and contributing, if possible, to the comfort of her afflicted daughter. But although our hero cannot be said to have had much business in town, it will be allowed by every one who has been admitted to his confidence, that his time had been fully occupied from the very hour of his arrival in it.

He examined his pocket-book for the precise direction to her lodgings; but finding that this consultation was likely to be increased by the arrival of several uninvited persons, who were gathering about him, he thrust the book into his pocket, and staring full in the face of these gentlemen, who were dressed somewhat in his own costume, he demanded "what they wanted with him!" They only smiled, and winking at each other — "hoped no offence." Pen, turning on his heel, was proceeding on his way, when one of the party, taking him familiarly by the arm, asked

him, "if he had any objection to parting with the pocket-book he had just seen." Pen stared — but shook off the man, and thinking him only a sturdy beggar, told him he was an impudent scoundrel; and putting forth his hand to seize him by the collar, found himself——— upon a bed, with red and white check curtains, in a small apartment, dimly lighted by a single candle, with two women busily employed in chafing his temples with brandy; and his respiration nearly stopped by large supplies of the same liquor poured down his throat!—

Even so, gentle reader: he had no recollection of what passed after putting forth his hand to seize the fellow whom he considered to have insulted him. He had been immediately felled to the ground by a ruffian behind; and those who are better acquainted than he was, with the dexterity of the London pickpockets, will understand the despatch used, in emptying the pockets of our unfortunate hero, and the little probability of their doing any thing to contribute towards his recovery.

This occurrence took place in the middle of this large market-place, among the pens, in which the cattle had been exposed in the

morning, and but few passengers took that line of walk, after the traffic of the day was over. Pen must have remained on the spot some time, as appeared from the statement of the person who found him, and who, like the good Samaritan, being neither more nor less than a Lincolnshire grazier, had raised him from the ground, and with the assistance of some persons who had answered his summons from the more frequented walks, conveyed him to the first public house whose doors stood open for the receipt of custom. Finding that the pockets of the stranger had been completely rifled, he being obliged to proceed on business, left a few shillings to ensure the attention of the people of the house, and promised to call again, on his return from his factor's.

Pen's first efforts were employed to resist the alternative, either of suffocation, or a state of inebriation, by refusing to swallow any more brandy, which already raged like a furnace within; but which, no doubt, had contributed to quicken the pulses, and restore him to life and recollection. The latter came upon him only by degrees, and it was some time before he

became acquainted with all the circumstances of which the reader is already possessed. He felt considerable pain in his head, but in the course of half an hour suffered little more from his misfortune than a sort of general numbness through his frame, which might, perhaps, be attributed as much to the remedy, as to the blow which he had received. He had been carefully examined under the inspection of the worthy grazier, whence it appeared, that no injury had been sustained in any other part of the body; and that, probably, the first blow having been effectual to the purpose of the villains, he had escaped further mischief, which they would not have hesitated to inflict, had it been necessary.

Our hero having risen from his bed, finding no occasion to remain any longer a prisoner, expressed a desire for something to eat, for his appetite was among the first of his faculties, that appeared to be perfectly restored. Whilst his meal was preparing, his deliverer, the grazier, arrived to enquire after him; and expressed himself much pleased to find the object of his benevolence, so far recovered from the effects of his misfortune. He then related to him the circumstances, to which Pen probably owed his

life; and for which our hero expressed his strong sense of obligation. "Thee might ha laid theere tull morening, youth," said the good man, "an I hadn't a call across the market; for I'se pretty well a match for thicken sort of Lunnun gentry, who plies in thom by places."

"Why, sir," cried Pen, "a man may traverse the deserts of Arabia as safely as the streets of London, if this be permitted."

"Laik enow! laik enow!—A duont knaw the ruod ye spaken on; but if its war nor this un, its bad enow, o' all conscience." By this time several other persons had taken their seats in the apartment, which was a sort of tap-room; and one, who appeared also from the country, and was sitting near the grazier, bore his testimony to the observation.

"Why, look ye, zirs," said he, "its but a year come next Lammaz, sin I were mysel up in the field, with a feu score of wethers."

"Whoat breed?" asked the grazier, keenly interrupting him.

"South-down like," replied the other; "and so I goes me to old Ladbrook's, and makes my

bargain; no higling with old Ladbrook; he knows the valley — and the markets zo."

"So!" taking him up, said the grazier, "thee made a bargain; I know the old fellow, and he's a sharp un at a push as ony on'em."

"A fair dealer, sir," observed the other.

"Oy, oy! — All fair in the way of treade."

"If I thought otherwise," answered the farmer, with something of an air of pique, "I'd carry my pigs to another market."

"Pigs!" quotha," said the grazier, laughing —

"Yees, as the saying is; but —"

"Wull, wull, let aluone," again interrupting the farmer, cried the grazier. — "He maun rouse be times that teakes me in! — a' who wad catch old birds, maun catch 'em at roost. It war another guess matter when a' was a youngster; but noo, a' defy em."

"Yees, yees, master! Ould birds — but as ai was saiying, I suold the wethers, zo —"

"What may 'em have faught?" asked the grazier.

"Ayte and thirty," answered the other.

"Nuoa greet sheakes, measter!"

"Ise content."

"Wull, wull! let aloane! — Its nuoa mun's busienys an thee's be satisfied.— I gets fuorty at Spalding; but let aluone," cried the grazier, with no little appearance of exultation; whispering to Pen at the same time, "he's but a flat I'm moinded; some West-country tinkler."

"Yees," answered the farmer, who heard not his by remark. — "Sic a man, as Tom Crossthwaite, in your north country, ha' their waiy an dtheir price too."

"Whoa! whoa!" exclaimed the grazier; "do'st thee knaw Tom Crossthwaite, as thee call'st un?"

"Knaw un!—why, yeez, zurely, by character;—'twould be waundy queer an I did'nt knaw the best feeder, and the warmest—"

"Thonk ye! thonk ye, maister! — What's yere name, neighbour? I daun't remember thee gib."

"Why thee be'nt he?" cried the other, staring in his face.

"Ben't I? then I ben't! but this u'll soy — Measter, — what's thee name?—"

"Noah Tup," answered the other.

"Whuoy then, Measter Toop, I thonk thee all as one for Tom Crossthwaite; for little as thee think'st it, thee be'st speaking to his own sel."

This the grazier said with no small degree of conscious pride.

"Indeed! — I ax yere pardon, Measter Crossthwaite; no offence I hope; no offence!"

"Offence, mun, for geeing un, a good word, thof thee did'st not speer me. Neay, neay, an that be all, we'll wash it doun in a sneaker of toddy. Here, mistress, let us ha a good half crown's urth. Its odd enow," turning again to the farmer, "that we shad'nt ha met before, Maister Toop."

"Ize Gloucestershire, Measter Crossthwaite, and duont often travel moiself," answered Mr. Tup. "Ize younger heels for off work; moreover, Measter Crossthwaite, I cannot abide the ways of this ere toon; it frits me, mun! it frits me, ever sin my mishap."

"What mishap?" demanded the grazier.

"As I were telling ye," said Mr. Tup, "its two years come next Lammaz."

"Thee sold thy wethers?"

"Yees; but then comes the quandary, Maister

Crossthwaite; — to think I shuld ha' stumbled on the very mun I were speaking on."

"Ha! ha! — 'twas queer enow."

"As I were saying, Measter Crossthwaite, I had touched the ready for ma wethers, and counted them into a bag."

"Well, weel!"

"And wad ye believe it, Measter Crossthwaite, befuor I slept that night, the bag and shiners were all clearn gon!"

"Guon! — wheyre!"

"Yees, where indeed? stolen, Measter Crossthwaite."

"Whoy how could'st be such a ninny-hammer."

"Ninny-hammer, Measter Crossthwaite, — I should liken to knaw how I was to prevent it. I commed as it were here, into a public house and I zit me down, as it war, theere, where you are, Measter Crossthwaite; — and theere zits a queer zort of a chap, as it may be where I am, and a begins a cock and a bull story about the Lord knaws what, and draws all our wonderment at a parcel of lies, as they all turned out to be, — and then he ploiys his antics an rigs, and pops his head under the table zo! and then up zo! and makes uz all laugh zo!"

"Like enow, like enow," cried the grazier; laughing at the representation.

"Yees; but it was no laughing matter in the end, as you'l foind, Measter Crossthwaite, for a' contrived some how or other, by his curzed vagaries, to whistle moy money bag, out of moy pocket."

"Aye, aye, did'nt I saiy, sir," turning to Pen, who was abstractedly discussing some eggs and bacon—"did'nt I saiy that our friend Toop here was a ninny-hammer to lose his money, and to be laughed out on't. Oh! Measter Toop, Measter Toop! I'se up to these rigs; I'se an ould bird, not to be catched by such chaff, I'se warrant ye—ha, ha!"

"Measter Crossthwaite, Measter Crossthwaite, its no laughing matter, I saiy agen; for just as ye may be grinning there, so war I, when up gets my story-teller, as I do naw, and walks out of the room with an air; and cries out to us, 'Let them laugh as wins'—;" and so, Master Noah Tup repeated the scene to a tittle, in pure imitation of the original, even to the shutting the door after him!

"Ha, ha, ha," roared the grazier, for Mr. Tup appeared to be an excellent actor; "ha, ha, weel, weel, good now—cuom in, cuom

in, — that ull do, Measter Toop, teak thee glass; thee wa'st a ninny-hammer still; war'nt he, my good, young gentleman?" appealing to his only auditor, Pen, who now filled a glass from the sparkling bowl. "Why yes, sir," answered Pen, "it seems odd, that a money bag should be laughed out of a man's pocket, it must be confessed." "Cuom, cuom Maister Toop," bawled the grazier, in a louder tone of voice — "cuom — the joke's over, you maun cuom in now!" The spirit however had vanished, and the incantations of the grazier appeared to be ineffectual to raise it again.

"That's waundy strange, arn't it, young gentleman; whuoy — what the dickons is the mun about? Here, missis, d'ye knaw fairmer Toop?"

"Anan, sir."

"D'ye knaw the fairmer as just left the ruom?"

"No, sir, never seed him in my born days before."

"Weel weel, he'll be bock at his laisure; so here's to your amendment, young gentleman."

Pen thanked him as in duty bound, and then again expressed how deeply he felt the

kindness and commiseration of the good grazier. He took down his address, for the purpose of remitting him the advances he had made, and declaring himself able to find his way home, was about to take his leave.

"Stuop a bit," cried the grazier, "I will see thee on thee way — I'll just woip off this score. — Mistress, what's to pay?"

"Five and eleven pence farthing, Sir."

"Weel, weel, — ye knaw hoo to rin up a score as well as yere betters; but no matter;" so thrusting his hand into his breeches' pocket, for his money bag —— Oh, reader, — he found how inimitable an actor was that farmer Noah Tup. "Hey, whuot!" exclaimed the gaping grazier, "ma pocket turned insoide out! — Holloa, — why I'm robbed, — plundered, pick-pocketed. — Murder! — there be foorty good poonds gone. Stop him, ye rascals! — Woman, woman, I'll ruin your house!"

"I'm sure, say your vorst, no one ever dar'st to utter a vord against my ouse."

"Why, I've been robbed, plundered in it, woman!"

"Not in my ouse' I'll be sworn," cried the landlady.

"Why, look thee, old fule, — an't my pockets clean picked?"

"That were not in my ouse, I'll stand it to any justice's face in the three kingums."

"Hell and fury, auld brute ye! wad ye talk me ut o' my seven senses?"

"Senses or no senses, never vas robbery committed in my ouse, and I'll take my davy of it, this blessed night before I sleep. — Here, Peg, bring down that here bible."

"What ha I to do wi' your swearing and your davy, wuoman; it won't swear back my money bag. I'm lost, unduone."

"Pray heaven, not," exclaimed Pen, who had not yet interfered; "are you sure?"

"Sure? whoy I felt it in my pouch when I cualled the rascal a ninny-hammer, — and rattled it in defiance; war there ever such a —"

"But, my good sir," cried Pen, "I trust and hope, that the loss will not affect you so deeply?"

"Deeply, young man, what's thee think I mai pick up foorty poonds in the kennel, or that a grows in the fens?"

"No, sir; I only mean, however serious the loss, — it is not, I hope, — it is not ruin."

"Ruin, mun!" answered the grazier proudly, "whot dost think foorty poonds will ruin Tom Crossthwaite, or twanty times foorty, or twanty to that? Nuoa, nuoa, it aint that; but I cannot bear that lousy rapscallion laughing in my face, and — but I'll not put up with it; I'll have 'em all before the justice."

"You may do as you please," cried mine hostess. "Here, Peg, go call your master from the club. You may just do as you please; but this I'll swear, and so shall Peg, and Nobs, that never was a robbery committed in this here ouse!"

"Why, good woman," cried Pen, "how can you take upon you to say —?"

"Take upon me — good woman indeed! no more a good woman than your mother, — be she who she may: — take upon me. —"

"The devil!" exclaimed our hero; "will you dare to say this gentleman has not been robbed?"

"Yes, I dare, — and swear it too, — not in my ouse!"

"Why! woman! is your house charmed?"

"None of your jibs upon my ouse, sir; paid scot and lot for twenty years, and it an't a

vhipper snapper like yourself shall gie it a bad name."

"A bad nuame!" cried the grazier; "I care not a rush for its nuame or its mistress; but robbed I hae been, and this gentleman ool swear it."

"Gentleman! pretty gentlemen both, forsooth!—without a brass varthing between you; your both in a story."

"Look ye, mistress," cried the enraged grazier, "law's to be had."

"Aye, thank my stars! Here, Peg, run to lawyer Ferret, in Knaves' acre. Yes, yes, law's to be had,—I warrant ye."

"Yes, woman, but not from Knaves' acre. I'll ferret ye, I'se warrant."

In such recriminatory discourse,—in which Pen occasionally bore a sufficient part to justify his being considered a staunch ally of his injured benefactor,—was a considerable time lost, whilst the latter appeared to obtain no consolation for the loss he had sustained, beyond that of venting his indignation in empty words.

A man, who had been listening to the conversation for some time, but who had taken no share in it, drew our worthy grazier and his

coadjutor, Pen, aside, and advised them to press the matter no further, for that all the satisfaction they were likely to obtain from law, would be expense and vexation;—that the rascal who had imposed upon Crossthwaite, was probably by this time so completely metamorphosed, that he might be playing the fine gentleman at the West-end of the town; "the people of the house," continued he, "are probably in league with him; but it would require more knowledge of the machinery, which works wheel within wheel, in this city of corruption, than you are likely to obtain in the course of your enquiry." There appeared to be so much good sense, and at the same time so much candour in the counsel thus given, that Crossthwaite was soon brought to consider his loss as a lesson upon his self-confidence, and a caution against falling into a new trap.

Pen, however, as is the case with the most ingenuous persons who have suffered by an over confidence in the professions of men, allowed a suspicion to enter his mind that this new ally might be some other rogue in disguise, suited for a new attack upon himself, or his fellow-sufferer. He recollected, just in time

to prevent an explosion, that this person must, in the course of the late discussions, have ascertained that the league was pennyless, and that nothing could come of nothing. He dismissed his suspicions, therefore, and submitted to the judgment of a man who appeared in all respects better capable of estimating their true interests than the coalesced powers of Crossthwaite and Pen Owen, with all their philosophy and experience to boot.

The grazier, however, could not agree altogether to suppress the indignation he experienced, or to leave the house without bestowing some hearty and energetic threats upon mine hostess, Peg, and the husband, who had by this time arrived, assuring them that they should hear from his lawyer before they were four and twenty hours older.

The concert, produced by this stirring symphony to the vocal powers of the domestic phalanx, was of a nature to astonish, if not to charm, by its novelty, the ears of our hero; but when the landlady, in the display of her powers, pushed her bony knuckles to the very tip of his nose, his passions, as usual, got the better of his discretion, and seizing the husband by the collar,

who had urged her on to this bravado, he dexterously turned her worse half (supposing herself to be the better) over his right leg, and left him sprawling on the floor.

The stranger now covered the retreat of his new allies, and whilst the cry of murder! thieves! fire! issued from the den, they made their way into the street, Crossthwaite insisting that Pen and his new companion should accompany him to his own lodgings at the Blue Posts, where they might have a cool tankard together. The proposition was accepted by the several parties, and our friends were soon seated round a good fire, with other social accompaniments, which the landlord, who duly appreciated the rank and importance of the Lincolnshire grazier, had already prepared for his reception.

CHAPTER III.

A common topic is the *desideratum* of a company whom accidental circumstances have brought together; but the late occurrences, in which all had been more or less engaged, furnished one ready made, to the hands of those assembled in the parlour at the Blue Posts. Crossthwaite, in spite of his boasted possessions, could not help looking upon his loss, as the poorest of his neighbours would have done, had his only ewe-lamb been taken from him by the spoiler.

"Weel, weel, — say what ye wul, its plaguy hard," observed he to his companions, "that a mun can't sit him down in a ruom without ha'ing his property whisked off; — what be the use o' laws, a shud loik to knaw, an thoiy sleep o this monner?"

"What, indeed," answered the stranger; "we may boast of our rights, and our laws, but whatever they may have been, they're clean gone now-a-days."

"Anan!" cried the grazier.

"I say, sir," returned the stranger, "we're little better than slaves, whilst we bawl liberty, as if we knew by experience what it was."

"Surely, sir," observed Pen, "we ought, in the present case, to complain of the laxity rather than the severity of our laws."

"It comes to the same thing," answered the stranger. "'Tis all the effect of corruption; when the head is rotten, the members can't hold together."

"Is not that a *Petitio Principii*, sir,—"

"A whuot?" asked Crossthwaite.

"I ask this gentleman," continued Pen, "whether he is not begging the question; for certainly, members may be deranged, without either the head or the system being corrupt. For instance, what law could anticipate the depredation made upon our friend's pocket? or how is the neglect of the magistrate to be inferred from an evil, which the vigilance of those most interested, could not on the spot, anticipate or prevent?"

"If the laws were not corrupt," retorted the other, "such breaches of them would not be tolerated."

" Rather," replied Pen, " if they were so corrupt as you say, those would not be breaches of them."

" If they were not corrupt, —they would prevent them."

" Nay, sir," answered Pen, " the law can only punish; prevention of crime is to be looked for only from the inculcation of sound morals!"

" And how is this likely to be the case, when every institution in society is contaminated by prejudice, and rotten at the core."

" I don't understand this," cried Pen.

" Why, what is your Parliament, your Courts of justice, your—."

" Whoy, thee'st nothing to say agen Parliment, mun?"

" Against it! what is there to be said for it?" demanded the stranger.

" For it! I du'ont knaw what's to be said for it," replied the grazier; " but this I knaw, it's the Constitution."

" What, —— in its present form!"

" Whoy, what the deuce other form would'st ha', mun. A' never seed it mysel, so caunt pretend to talk about its form; but —"

" Really, sir," said Pen, " I cannot infer

your meaning. Is not Parliament just what it always was — or, if any alteration has taken place, is it not all — on the popular side?"

"The deuce it is!" cried the stranger; "what, the corruption, the boroughmongering system, the —"

"I know nothing of these cant terms of party; I say that, in what are called *the proudest periods of our history*, corruption stalked in open day, and members of parliament received bribes, as openly as lawyers now do their fees."

"What's that to the question; though I don't believe a word on't."

"Sir," exclaimed Pen, "I speak from authority."

"Suppose you do, sir; our eyes are now opened; we see the corruption, and we must crush it."

"You see, what doesn't exist, sir," retorted Pen; "no such degrading traffic is carried on in the present — *corrupt times*."

"Whoi, ater all gentlemen," cried the grazier, "what the dickens has Parliament to do wi moi pocket being picked, by that confounded rascal Noah Toop, as he called himself?"

"Every thing! if there is no foundation, the

whole building will totter," answered the stranger.

"But, sir," observed Pen, "you have not proved the fact yet."

"Proved! isn't it as light as day? What need of proof? Are not seats bought, and sold, and trafficked like bales of goods?"

"A man may buy a seat in parliament," returned Pen, "without carrying rottenness to the constitution. — I have been told that almost all our greatest patriots and most distinguished statesmen have bought their seats."

"What of that, they're your sham patriots, your lack-a-daisical whigs, who denounce a minister, and walk arm in arm with the honorable gentleman the next moment."

"Why, sir," exclaimed Pen, "it is to such men we owe the existence of our liberties. I don't speak of trading politicians on one side or the other, either in the higher or lower ranks; but of men who are interested in the preservation of our rights, and who do not think it necessary to become the tools of faction, or the preachers of sedition, in order to check the excesses of a minister or the peculations of a public servant."

"They may all be shaken in a bag together,"

returned the stranger; "whigs and tories, ins and outs, and the devil not be much puzzled when he puts his hand in."

"And yet, sir," resumed Pen, "it is to the conflicting interests of party, that we owe the blessings of our constitution."

"Pretty blessings! and heaven thank these corruption-breeders for them."

"What has all on a sudden corrupted these men?" asked Pen; "men who from their property,—station, and connexions, are at least as much interested—as the sturdiest reformer can be in the common weal?"

"Bribery, corruption, and boroughmongering!"

"But, sir! you will admit, that open boroughs and counties are often bribed into a return of members."

"That may be; we can't help that."

"Will that mend the matter—How is a man who has bought and corrupted whole masses of people, to carry a load of virtue into parliament; whilst he who simply pays the same money, for the purchase of a seat, without either corruption or bribery,—is loaded with execration and accused of mercenary motives?"

"Because it is against the constitution!"

"Where is the constitution, sir?" asked Pen.

"Where!—the Lord knows where; any where, but where it ought to be."

"The Lord deliver me from such a rigmarole," cried the grazier; "the constitution, any where!—odds, mun, thee dostn't mean to sai ould England ha'nt a constitution?—What's all to do, at Westminster there?"

"I only wished the gentleman," observed Pen, with a smile of contempt, peculiarly his own, "to point out the constitution, which appears so defined to him, and to show how the practice of the same constitution in the best times, differs from that of our own."

"Why, zounds," exclaimed the stranger, "you don't mean to defend corruption!"

"Far from it, sir," answered Pen; "I only want to ascertain it."

"And isn't it before your eyes?"

"If so, I am too blind to perceive it."

"None so blind, as those who will not see."

"I only ask you to open my eyes."

"Hav'n't I told you, seats are bought and sold among the boroughmongers."

"I answer again, this is no proof of corrup-

tion, or at least no proof of corruption, peculiar to our times; for I repeat, it existed in what the reformers of the present day call the great, and glorious times of the constitution. But I will go further, and confess that I think a man infinitely more independent, in the fullest sense of the term, who enters the House of Commons as the purchaser of a seat, than one who, to secure his own interests with them, has been playing the courtier and sycophant, and must continue to do so, to please and pamper the prejudices and passions of his constituents. Such a man is a slave to one small faction of the nation, and shackled in his efforts to benefit the whole. If he is sincere in the proffers he makes, (alas! how seldom,) and in the gross flatteries he bestows upon them, he is fitter for a courtier, than the legislator of an extensive empire: if he is acting the hyprocrite with them to gain a seat, he is capable of any baseness to turn that seat to his own profit. The man who pays his money for what you gentlemen call a rotten borough, may be a rogue; but, at least, he has not proved himself one by previous practice. He may, like the other, hypocritically profess patriotism, to further his own selfish ends; but

he has not previously cajoled and cheated his electors, as an earnest of his talent at manœuvering."

"And you call this man a representative?"

"I do, sir, in the strictest sense of the word. A member of the British Parliament is not a DELEGATE. When a man once passes the threshold of the Commons House of England, he represents the Commons at large, and not a particular county or district. He may, from circumstances, have local interests to guard, but even a turnpike bill, or an enclosure, interesting alone to his constituents, can but command his solitary vote. It is the country,—the majority of the representatives of the whole empire,—that must decide its adoption or rejection. If it were otherwise, a member of Parliament would resemble a satrap or governor of a district, and his constituents would become eventually little better, than the slaves of the soil. Each would be absorbed in the petty interests and cabals of his particular charge; and being responsible to his constituents, rather than to his countrymen at large, his public conduct without a check, and his private intrigues beyond the reach of investigation, a power unknown to

the institutions of a free state, would be engendered and fostered in every corner of the empire. County would be found jobbing against county,—borough against borough; and the practised politician might, by turns, bribe and sell his constituents, with whose local interests he would thus so identify himself as at length to render a separation on their part—impolitic,—if not impracticable."

"This is all wild—all abroad, sir."

"Wild!—is it so wild, as to suppose that you can check corruption, by extending the means to corrupt; or that by opening the doors to sharpers and adventurers, you can cleanse and purify a legislature, composed (no matter how) of all the prominent talent, and professional wisdom of the country;—of the most distinguished representatives of the landed,—the commercial,—and trading interests; and altogether of those who bear the stamp, and character of men of honour so legibly, that the least flaw in their title is discernible, pointing them out to public scorn, and barring their access to the higher honours of the state."

"Still they are not elected by the people."

"Not by the people at large, admitted; but

were they ever so elected, or was it ever proposed they should be —"

"By the constitution they ought to be."

"Show me any authority, prescriptive or practical, and I will admit the fact,—however disposed to deny its expediency."

"At least, it is generally so believed; and at all events, you will not deny that the right of voting has been shamefully infringed upon."

"I do deny it, sir; and upon authority you cannot dispute. When the elective franchise was limited to forty shilling freeholds, the GREAT BODY OF THE PEOPLE were excluded from the right altogether; for forty shillings, at that period, were at least equal to as many pounds of our present money, and the change has operated to extend the franchise to thousands, who, without this nominal change in the value of money, would by the constitution — have had no vote at all."

"I know nothing about that," returned the stranger, in rather a subdued tone; "I am only interested in what concerns the present day; and thousands who have the right of voting, are excluded by the tricks and knavery of those who have power to keep us down."

"I have shown, I think," continued Pen, "that they have no right; for natural rights, as you reformers call every wild demand for a participation of power, cannot be abstractedly considered or applied to a state existing under fixed laws and established compact. But this is from the point; I would limit myself to present evils, which you affirm to exist, and the existence of which, until you produce proofs stronger than mere assertion, I must still deny. What have you to say,--not theoretically, but practically, — against the description of men, (subject, I admit, to human infirmities, and not without exceptions,) who, at this present moment constitute the legislative body?"

"Including in their number the whole host of boroughmongers?"

"I see no ground of exclusion!—Why, sir," cried Pen, raising his voice, as was his father's practice, when he supposed an assertion might be mistaken for a paradox; "why, sir, I have no hesitation in saying, that the objects, abstractedly considered, for which parliaments are constituted, would be fully accomplished, if the electors of Northumberland were to choose representatives for London, or those of Westminster to return members for

Cornwall. All local interests, by the spirit of the English constitution — which is, after all, the depository and the aggregate of the good sense and sound experience of successive generations — are to merge, and must be made to merge, in the general interest of the whole; as each individual in society must necessarily sacrifice a portion of his independence to secure the liberty of all."

"Cuom, cuom, now," interrupted the grazier, "that wud be a strange soit, howsomever; a caunt consent to that by no manner o' means. I maun chuse my oune parliament, man, cuom what wull —"

"I don't know where the deuce the gentleman is running," cried the stranger.

"I run at nothing, sir," answered Pen; I have asserted, and do assert again, — that the mere mode of election is a matter of comparative indifference. — I say comparative, — so long as the property of the country is duly represented; so long as the representatives of that property, in some shape, or another, are sent to parliament. As to the qualities and principles of men, they will differ as much, after your projected reforms as before; and will so continue to do, until human

nature itself be reformed. Common safety is the real bond of political union; and those who possess property, individually, — will be most anxious to preserve property, upon the whole."

"Why is property," demanded his opponent — "why is property to be the only thing represented?"

"Simply because property is the first thing to be secured upon a permanent basis; for without this, — liberty can be nothing but licentiousness."

"And so the rich are everlastingly to grind the poor."

"How that follows, I am at a loss to conceive," replied Pen, who began to grow warm in his subject, "unless you conclude government under every form — to be a tyranny."

"Pretty near the mark," retorted the stranger.

"Then we need argue no further, sir," cried Pen, starting upon his legs; "if you understand the force of your inference, you are the advocate of pure anarchy; and none but a madman will reason from such premises."

"I mean! — I mean no such thing, sir; it is you that are the madman, I think."

"Sir!" exclaimed Pen.

"I mean no offence, sir; — but when you talk of the electors of Westminster, electing members for Cornwall, — and at a sweep get rid of the glorious franchise of —"

"Psha, sir! you confound hypothesis with argument. I never meant to recommend such a measure, but to illustrate my opinion that even such a mode of election would be more consonant with the first principles of the constitution, than your bewildering chimera of universal suffrage."

"Right is right, sir: every man has a right to vote for represensatives in parliament."

"Pray, sir, may I ask — where you find this right?"

"In the constitution."

"In the clouds! — Show me, sir, something more tangible; — show it me — in the practice of the constitution."

"It needs no showing; it is among the first rights of man."

"So is eating his brother, — if he be strong enough to slaughter him; — if not, he must submit to be eaten himself. And so, in the only instance of these rights being literally reduced to practice in later times, — universal suffrage ap-

pears to have been the harbinger of universal slaughter, — where the constituents and their free-chosen representatives — were alternately victims and butchers."

"Waunds!" exclaimed Crossthwaite, "a never heered o' such thing; wheere mought this have happened, hey?"

"The gentleman is talking of the old story of the French Revolution," replied the stranger, turning contemptuously towards the grazier.

"Oiy, oiy! — bad fellows them ere French men, sure enow."

"Old or new," retorted Pen, "it is truth written in characters of blood, which none but those who thirst for blood can regard other than as a beacon to warn their countrymen — from running headlong into the same devouring whirlpool."

"This!" replied the other, "is always the way with your party; when argument fails, you fly to —"

"My arguments fail, sir! (a sore point with Pen) my —— But no matter; facts are better than the strongest arguments, and experience a far better guide than opinion."

"Why should the same excesses follow from a reform in this country?"

"Because the same causes will generally produce the same effects; — because, in the present moment, the cause is advocated upon the same principles, — appeals to the same dangerous passions of man, — and opens the same means of gratifying them; — because, erroneous as was the principle, upon which those men acted, many good, honest, and patriotic individuals were sincere in their adoption of them. Whereas, there is not one — no, sir, not one — among the present leaders of popular delusion, who does not anticipate general havoc and destruction, which the others never contemplated — who does not look to revolution when he cries REFORM. They only hoped to effect reform, — when they found themselves plunged in REVOLUTION."

"It is'nt fair, sir, to stigmatize, in this sweeping manner, thousands of your countrymen."

"I would say the same if they were my brothers, and merited it as truly," answered Pen, coolly.

"You forget, sir, that some of the leading men in the country, — some of your own favoured

aristocracy — your nobles, and your honourables, and your right honourables — come in for their share of your censure."

"And — they are most heartily welcome to it!"

"Do you suppose they look forward to such scenes as you describe — that they are disposed to resign their titles, and their ribbons, and their lands, — for the sake of a scramble?"

"I should think them one degree less guilty, if I did."

"Then you do not believe them to be sincere?"

"No, sir! — if I thought so — there would be a drawback on the score of pity; — and they could not be chargeable with hypocrisy."

"The Reformers are not to be deceived by false friends!"

"I never suspected them of being fools," replied Pen, with a peculiar emphasis.

"Then you must allow the others to be knaves?"

"It is not my business," answered our hero, "to class the parties. — I trust my country, in the long-run, will do that effectually."

" The short of the matter, then, is, sir," said the stranger, " you would have no reform at all."

" I object to reform no where, sir," replied Pen, " when it is necessary; but I must be convinced of its necessity, by better arguments than I have heard to-night, before I give my voice to so hazardous an experiment."

" Necessity ! — why hav'nt you yourself admitted the fact, that seats in parliament are bought and sold; and what have you urged in defence of it ? — moonshine, — an opinion. —"

" Moonshine, — my opinion, sir ! Are you aware —"

" No offence, no offence intended; but opinions are but opinions, and as you yourself observed, just now, cannot weigh against facts."

" Facts, — true ; but you must call your facts by their right names."

" They are still facts, call them as we will ; — but let that pass. — I only ask you, sir, — why few great overgrown landholders are to monopolize all power, and grind down the great mass of the people, as if they were mere slaves of the soil."

" I should rather ask you to prove your fact, before I can be called upon to account for it."

"Who are our law-makers, but those imperious lords, who combine to rivet our chains?"

"They may be law-makers, without either imposing chains or rivetting them — but, perhaps, by this pretty figure of speech, you design to represent the laws altogether —"

"The laws in *these* hands I certainly do ——"

"Then, sir, we understand each other. You would prove that anarchy is preferable to any regular form of government — and it necessarily follows that laws are but types of slavery."

"Give me leave to say, sir, you do not understand me, at least; no man has a greater reverence for the laws, or is more firmly attached to the constitution, than myself."

"Only — that, like the man who had grown so attached to his knife that he bestowed a new blade and then a new handle to it — you would renew it altogether."

"No, sir, I say what I think, and what I feel; — I am not bound to uphold the faults and defects, though I may love the constitution as sincerely as you do."

"Depend upon it, sir, our love begins to slacken ominously, — when the faults of the

object are more visible to our perception—than its beauties—one step more, and our love is turned to hate."

"Aye,—well,—I don't understand all these roundabout ways;—I stick to my facts, and want only a plain answer, to a plain question; why, because men have monopolized our land, should they have the power to monopolize our rights?"

"Still, your question in this form is any thing but a question;—for you beg the whole of it,—and then demand a categorical answer. But since you are determined to have one, I answer, in the first place,—that those who have the greatest stake are likely to be most interested in the welfare of the country, whilst at the same time I readily admit, that this predominance should be so extended, as to prevent partial or unjust leaning toward any particular class, or order of men, in society."

"There you have hit it; isn't that what I say?" asked his opponent triumphally.

"I fear, not exactly," answered Pen; "for, by referring to the very grievance,—the canker which the nice optics of the reformers have

discovered in the system of close boroughs, — we shall find that the practice of the constitution, in deviating from the strict theory, has applied the most effective means of preventing any undue preponderance of the landed interest over those of the monied, — the commercial, — or trading part of the community. I will not discuss with you, sir, the first principles of government; — I have already said, what no man acquainted with the subject has ever denied, — that the representatives of a country whose object is permanency and security must be the representatives of its property. This is the principle of English legislation. When this was originally established in our constitution, — which, by the bye, you, sir, seem to imagine a piece of old parchment, drawn up by some notable lawyer, and declared regularly signed, and sealed by somebody, at some particular date—"

"I said no such thing," interrupted the stranger.

"Your arguments imply it, at least; but when this principle was first understood and acted upon, — land was the chief, if not almost the only representative of property: so that even

the boroughs were frequently omitted in the returns to parliament, through the agency of their superior lords."

"Wasn't that an insufferable grievance, sir?"

"It might be so, sir, in your opinion; but we are speaking of the *pure* periods of the constitution, — to which your reformers look back with such tender yearnings, — when, instead of a grievance,—it was considered as a relief from a burthen. I must not, however, be interrupted, sir. —Land, I repeat, was *then*, the representative of the property of the country; but as the rights of individuals came to be better ascertained, — when the professions were opened to men of every rank and station in life, —when the spirit of adventure brought the treasures of a new world to our shores, — and commerce and trade multiplied the sources of wealth, — a strict adherence to the letter of the constitution would have excluded the whole, or greater part of this new property (inasmuch as it was extraneous and independent upon the land) from being represented in parliament, and have subjected a large and daily increasing portion of the people, to the overruling and predominant influence of the landed interest. Without,

therefore, imputing injustice to the landed interest, we may suppose their ignorance of the true nature of mercantile or commercial transactions, to be a sufficient ground for some change in the original plan of representation. There was no opening, no provision made for this new state of things;—it was not because certain towns, rising into importance, and certain ports, appropriate to commerce might occasionally send men capable of watching their interests,—that the great mass of persons unrepresented at all—would be satisfied. These, as I said before, might assert local rights and privileges; but it was necessary, with a view to the country at large, and to the privileges of the constitution, that some essential change should be made in the general representation: our ancestors were too wise to propose sweeping reforms. The constitution had been gradually forming itself, under the collective wisdom of succeeding generations; and any sudden deviation from its course was only likely to produce those rude convulsions, which have more than once, threatened the subversion of all, that has rendered us the wonder and admiration of surrounding nations."

"Bravo, Bravo!" exclaimed the grazier, who had been roused from a gentle slumber by the increasing energy of our hero. "Auld England's worth 'em all shaken together."

"The machine," continued Pen, who hardly heard his *cheerer*, "was so well put together, that it gradually adjusted itself to the new order of things. As ancient boroughs decayed, — or became rotten, if the term please you better, — they fell under the influence of small bodies, and even individuals, who by degrees secured a right in them, between which, and the exercise of it, no law could interpose; and this right, by purchase or conveyance, was made over to individuals of every class, or order in the community, who could afford to avail themselves of it by the profits of professions, commerce, or any other branch of honourable industry and exertion. It might be affirmed, indeed, that this innovation was essentially democratical; and it might without difficulty be proved, by reference to facts, that these rotten boroughs have constantly afforded an opening to the admission of men who have most strenuously advocated the cause of the people, and who could

by *no other means* — have found their way into Parliament.

"What of that," demanded the stranger. "Have not the people — in the same proportion — been dispossessed of their rights? have they not forfeited their franchises?"

"Surely not, in the instances to which I allude. The rights you speak of must have disappeared with the population."

"Then, pray let me ask what you have to say upon close boroughs; *they* have not lost their population?"

"They have lost no rights, at least. They remain as they were originally constituted."

"And is it fit, or proper, that a few corrupt men, called a corporation, should usurp the power which belongs only to the people?"

"I know of no rights which are not acknowledged by the constitution. Every corporation is an elective body — generally elected for their character and respectability by their fellow citizens; and I see no reason, why a certain number of men of character are, because they became incorporated, necessarily corrupt. You seem to forget, that in your favourite example

of French liberty, with a *carte blanche* before them, and reams of constitutions in their pigeon-holes — elections were, and continued to be, conducted throughout the country upon a principle — very analogous with that you are so disposed to decry as a mere trick of corruption. There the electors are removed, — stage after stage, — to a far remoter distance from their representatives in the legislature; — and you or I, in exercising our rights in the primary assemblies, should know no more of the actual candidate — than of the man in the moon."

"All I can say, then, is, that it is a very imperfect mode of election."

"And yet it is the final result of a *philosophical* reformation; which, meeting with no opposition either from tyrants above, or the people below, — was at liberty to establish an Utopia, — had they been so pleased."

"We have nothing to do with French reformers."

"You had better at least take a warning, rather than an example from them."

"All I mean to say," said the stranger, who appeared to have exhausted his stock in hand — "all I mean to say is, that it is hard

the people of England should be deprived of their undoubted rights. God knows, I want no bloodshed or plunder; but if parliament wo'nt do us justice, — we are entitled to take our own affairs into our own hands."

"The plea of necessity is, unquestionably, a strong one; but until you hear the case made out to your perfect satisfaction, it might be wiser to leave your affairs — where they are. Depend upon it, it would not mend the matter to have a horde of mob-orators—adventurers without principle—moral or religious; poor, desperate, and needy masters — either of your liberties or your exchequers. Let me put one question to you, which I would rather you should answer to yourself, upon your pillow to-night: What reasonable ground have you to suppose, that six hundred men, of honourable life and character — I repeat *generally*, for exceptions must ever present themselves — of birth, rank, and education, — men, who in their private conduct are unimpeachable, should, by being assembled together in a body, become at once rogues, plunderers, and tyrants? Or, by what possible process can you arrive at this conclusion, on the other side, that an equal number of men

chosen by the most ignorant, and unenquiring classes of the people, under the influence of leaders, who are known to be of desperate fortune,—and of most abandoned character in every private relation of life, — are by incorporation, to become at once pure, — incorrupt, — and incorruptible stewards of a people's rights and property?"

"A reform at least," returned his opponent, "will prevent its being worth any man's while to be dishonest."

"Why, to be sure," said Pen, smiling, "Mr. Noah Tup could not possibly have proved himself a thief to-night, — if our friend here, had not possessed a bag of gold for him to steal; — but this is after all, but a negative sort of security, which is at present as effectually afforded — by the dread of punishment."

"Common interest, and common sense, would be the guide of a people — truly free."

"Common sense, and common interest," replied Pen, "may be fully sufficient to conceive a beneficial plan of self-preservation; but it requires something more to originate one for their common purposes."

"Every man," retorted the other, "knows what liberty is."

"Not one in ten thousand!" exclaimed Pen.

"Cuom, cuom," interrupted the grazier, "that maun be a bounce at ony reat, saving your presence, moy friend; the deuce is in't, an ev'ry ass, duont know that."

"But the ass can't tell you what it is,—and remains still an ass," replied Pen, laughing.

"And a beast of burthen," snarled the reformer, "or he wouldn't continue such an ass."

"If you are speaking of your friends, sir," continued Pen, still laughing, "you have clapped the saddle on their backs,—not I."

"Faith, sir, it may be sport to you; but 'tis death to us."

"That is, as things may happen to turn up," cried Pen, still enjoying his joke,—which may not be equally perceptible to the reader: but after a short time, finding his opponent silent, he addressed him in a more calm, and friendly manner, and from his appearance, and circumstances which occurred during the foregoing discussion, conceiving him to be a misguided, rather than an unprincipled person, he asked

him, whether he had never heard his associates in reform, confess that their object was, in effect, "to do away with the regal government?"

"We never professed any such views," was the reply.

"And yet, sir, it is clear as the sun at noon-day, that a House of Commons reformed according to your plan could not subsist under a monarchy; in plainer terms,—that a regal government could not co-exist with a legislature so formed, for a single year. It would be no longer a house of representatives; but a chamber of delegates, who, claiming to govern in the name of the sovereign people, would feel —and quickly avow the inconsistency, of submitting their decrees to the ordeal, either of Lords, or King. They would at least discover, as the old rump of Oliver Cromwell, and their more modern copyists, the French regicides did,—that both a king and a house of peers only stood in their way, and that they could just as well do without them.—With their subsequent necessity of recurring for security to the old standard, and of restoring the same things, under the different names of emperors,—or protectors,—of conservative senates, and councils

of state,—we have nothing, at present, to do."

"And so—you would have us submit—"

"Stop, sir," cried Pen fiercely, "I can reason with a REFORMER; but I must repel a REBEL: you either fight under false colours, or you must disprove the result I have anticipated, to be consistent with your scheme."

"Why, thee ben't one of them radicals—ater all, mun, be'est thee?" asked the grazier.

"That's the way with you all," cried the baffled reformer; "you can call names."

"Not I," answered Pen, with great calmness: "I did not say you *were* a rebel,—I only meant to show, that what is called radical reform, must inevitably lead to the subversion of the constitution, for which it professes to entertain so jealous an affection,—that those who are capable of reasoning upon the subject, cannot fail to perceive it;—and that those who are not, are only blind instruments in the hands of those who do. The charge of corruption is brought against our existing institutions, and public functionaries, without any evidence beyond that, which goes to prove,—what no man in his sense ever doubted,—that no human work is, or ever

can be perfect, or perfectly exercised. A change is proposed under the general and undefined term of reform, which actually undermines, and provides for the destruction, of all that is virtually good with what may be supposed capable of improvement, and has rendered the country for centuries, the envy and admiration of Europe; whilst it carries with it not a shadow, or pretence of remedying a single evil, it professes to have discovered. The popular branch of the constitution has for many years been gaining ground upon the other two estates; and I have no hesitation in affirming that the power of the crown, is more circumscribed and limited in the present, than in any former period of our history. The few crafty politicians, who are the secret springs, and movers of the radical party, perceive this, — and cry out against the House of Commons, as the usurpers of power, — whilst they affect to identify the interests of the people, with those of the crown, at the very time, *in fact*, when they are labouring to seize upon that popular branch of the legislature, as the most effective and powerful means of becoming masters of the government, and turning it equally against the people, and the two other

estates of the realm. All parties, my good sir," continued Pen, — whose brain having been set in commotion by the hostile appeal, recently made, to the outside of his head, — or by the sapping system of the spirituous remedies within it, — had become unusually eloquent, — "all parties are constructed upon the same principles; it matters not whether it is limited to the weekly club at mine host's in the village, or extended over the country, in affiliated societies, from a parent-stock in the metropolis. A few strong and determined heads, who perceive all their points, and concentrate all their means of aggression, gain the ascendant; a larger number of agents receive from them their cue, and dole out in daily portions, through the medium of a hireling and prostituted press, or in clubs, associations, and public meetings, — poisoned food for discontent, and disaffection towards the government. The evils incident to all men, but more pressing upon the subordinate classes, — as must inevitably and necessarily be the case in every community, — are made to appear the result of peculiar and extraordinary corruption on the part of their governors: every privation is felt, which had never been felt before, and the com-

mon lot of man is rendered intolerable to them, by the conviction, that it is the immediate product of tyranny and oppression. There is but one step from feeling an injury, to the attempt at redressing it. A patriot, or mob orator is at hand with the means, and the misguided multitude rush forward to aid his patriotic exertions, without stopping to enquire, or without sufficient intelligence to ascertain, the nature or extent of his designs. The people of this country, who wept tears of blood as a martyred sovereign was led to slaughter, — had been blind instruments, in the hands of his murderers, and invested them with power sufficient, to crush their monarch, and themselves. — The people are again called forth, and encouraged by the promises of men, who have not even the pretext, which gave an air of patriotism, to the rebellious Roundheads; and whilst they thoughtlessly accumulate the materials for their own future subjugation, would be incapable of informing a bystander whether they were about " to fire another Troy," or to see a man creep into a quart bottle."

" Whaw!" exclaimed the grazier, startled from his slumber by the vehemence of Pen's

oratory; "then these radicals be bottle conjurors, 'ater all, be they?"

"Something like it," answered Pen, laughing.

"Well, sir," cried the reformer, starting from his seat, "it is not worth my while to refute you; you are self-willed — bigotted to the system — but — yes, sir — I should like to hear you, where you would meet with your match — I wish I had you — "

"Where, sir?" demanded Pen.

"Where I am going this moment," answered the stranger, significantly.

"I fear to go no where, sir," retorted Pen, with an air of confidence.

"You'll not betray us!" said the reformer, mysteriously.

"Do you suspect me, sir?" demanded Pen.

"I think not; but there is danger."

"None that I shall shrink from, sir!" cried our true hero.

"I am going — to a select meeting."

"Of whom?" asked Pen.

"Of men who are embarked in the glorious cause; and who, in five minutes, will convince you of your errors, sir!"

"I am open to conviction," answered Pen.

"And will be moderate!"

"I always am so."

"Humph!—well, sir; take this ticket."

"Ticket! why it's a hieroglyphic!"

"It will gain you admission without enquiry. Come, sir, if you have courage: we have not far to go."

"Courage! doubt it not, sir."

"Whoir be ye gawing?" asked the grazier; "its toim for Bedforshoire, I think."

"I think it is," replied the reformer, looking at his watch; it is time for us to be off, at least. Good night, Mr. Crossthwaite; I trust, you may meet with no more of Mr. Noah Tup's family, before you return to Lincolnshire."

"Thank ye naighbour, thank ye; thof my moind misgives me, ye be about some roguery of your awn."

"We are only going—to meeting, sir," answered Pen, smiling.

"Joy go with ye! I loik no such works, oim all for mother-church."

"And King!" added the reformer, with a sneer.

"Yees, sir! and what's more, will foit for un; *agen* all's enemies abroad and at huom," retorted the grazier, with more warmth and decision than he had before evinced. "I doint loik your carrying off yon youngster, to your meeting-houses and the loik—he—"

"Fear not," answered Pen: "my principles are pretty well fixed, and settled upon those points. Our friend here (pointing to the stranger) is not likely to make a convert of me."

"There's no soying, there's no soying, young mun! seeing, as how, he as handles thorns moi prick un's fingers."

"You're 'an old bird,' you know," cried Pen.

"Whew! whew!" grinned the grazier; and the parties shook hands;—our hero and his radical friend, leaving honest Crossthwaite to doze over his loss, and quitting the room together.

CHAPTER IV.

OUR hero, and his companion proceeded with hasty steps, through several blind alleys and cross courts, till they arrived at the door of a house, which stood apart from any thoroughfare, and appeared to be uninhabited. The stranger rapped upon it three times, which was answered by "a hem" from within; and the countersign being exchanged, it was opened. No person appeared, and the door itself seemed to close, by some sort of spring or machinery, the moment Pen and his companion had entered.

From a sort of pigeon-hole, such as are sometimes seen at a country play-house for the receiver of admissions, issued the only light which rendered the "darkness visible;" and a hand (without any other part of the body being seen) presented itself, for the hieroglyphical card of admission, which was returned after it had apparently been examined.

They proceeded onward, and passing several passages, dimly lighted by an occasional candle, reached, at length, a room of considerable size,— of very antique form, and in a state of considerable dilapidation. At the upper end appeared a chair, evidently intended for the president of the assembly, and a long table immediately in front, on which were placed four large candles. Just over the candles were suspended an equal number of extinguishers, which, it was evident, might be simultaneously employed, to produce immediate darkness.

About twenty men, — whose figures could be but imperfectly discerned through the gloom, — were divided about the room in small groupes; whilst benches were provided on either side of the table, for a much larger number of persons. Our hero was resolved to be a silent spectator of all that was going forward, although his imagination was busy in its review of the mysterious preparations for the coming scene.

The assembly seemed gradually to be enlarged, although by imperceptible means; for so confined was the light, thrown by the candles, on the table, that figures appeared to emerge from darkness into life, as they approached its limited precincts.

At length, something like activity, was apparent among the members; and soon after, several persons came forward with much form and gravity, and occupied the principal seats immediately round the table. A presiding spirit was seated in the chair. Our hero observed, that there seemed to be infinitely more precision in the mode of proceeding among the members, of what he now concluded to be the embryo of a reformed Parliament, than in that, which it recalled to his recollection. The recollection however was well timed, as it was followed by a renewal of his resolution not to risk the consequences of such another act of imprudence, as he had upon that occasion, been guilty of. He suspected,—from some of the countenances which were now more obvious to his criticism,—that a breach of privilege in *this* house, would be attended with a more prompt and rigorous penalty, than that which he had formerly experienced.

The president was a little dark looking man, with a scant crop of jet black hair, upon his head. His nose, attenuated to a point, was surmounted by an enormous pair of green spectacles, the tint of which communicated to

the natural sallowness of his complexion, a cadaverous appearance, that made one look about him, for the cerements of the grave, as more suited to the *tout ensemble* of his physiognomy, than the great coat in which his person was enveloped. Near him stood several men, whose countenances spoke a strong, but vulgar energy of mind, varied according to the different features of each. Their dress and appearance indicated what is expressively termed the shabby genteel; whilst, as the eye descended to the more numerous class of persons, now ranged on the benches near the table, it decided at once upon their rank in life,—as artificers and artizans,—whose faces displayed a variety of passions and sensations, not so easily classed as those, who evidently were considered, and treated as chiefs, and leaders in the assembly.

Our hero was very much disposed, at one moment, in spite of his previous resolution, to laugh at the mock heroic scene, which was opening itself to his view; but his companion, who kept his eye,—and even hand upon him, and had placed Pen, as well as himself, out of the range of the partial rays of light,—seemed to anticipate the effect, by earnestly pressing his

arm, and whispering him, for Heaven's sake to be quiet.

A sort of muster-roll was now called over, and a severe scrutiny observed, with respect to the alleged excuses, of absentees. After this ceremony was duly performed, especial messengers were ordered to examine the entrances, (for there appeared to be several, though not obvious to a common observer,) and to set the guard!

The chairman then, in a solemn voice, demanded, "if there were any unsworn members present." Pen's friend again pressed his arm to insure his silence; and the negative being apparently given unanimously, no further impediment presented itself, to opening the business of the sitting.

The president began, by a general invective against false brethren, and the necessity of arming themselves, against the apostacy of certain men, — whom he described, but named not — who had suffered themselves to be alienated from the brethren, by their doubts, apprehensions, or what they chose to call conscience. "Countrymen," he went on to say, "these are not times for the indulgence of womanish fears: we are embarked in a cause, in which Brutus

triumphed, and Hampden and Sidney bled. But why do I occupy your time?—you are aware—let me again," interrupting himself, "demand, in the name of this assembly, of truly free men, is there any uninitiated, any unsworn brother among us." A pause ensued, during which, Pen felt assured that his arm, had incurred several black and blue mementos, of his conductor's apprehensions.

He was, however, silent; and the president was about to resume the thread of his address, when one of the assembly suggested, that if there was any doubt upon the subject, it might be advisable to propose the oath, to all present.

Pen felt, that neither his friend's remonstrances, nor his own apprehensions, should influence him to conform to the proposition; and he prepared himself accordingly, for what might follow. Luckily for him, however, it was overruled, by a buzzing sort of acclamation, among the eager expectants of the disclosures evidently looked for in the speech of the chairman. He proceeded:—"Countrymen and brother patriots!—with you it is altogether unnecessary to urge motives:—those who are sworn to die in the cause, rather than forsake it, must have long ago made up their minds upon the

necessity of the case. — Every man of you stands pledged in this our solemn and last court of appeal! — It has been over and over again proved, that, beyond these walls, sacred to liberty, we are SLAVES; — and we will be SLAVES NO LONGER. —"

The latter clause was repeated in one burst by the whole assembly, *sotto voce*; — "and," — continued he, raising his voice, and with increasing energy, — "those who are content to remain slaves, and hug their chains, — shall be SLAVES to their LIBERATORS, — and not to the hirelings and bloodsuckers of a corrupt, — worm eaten, — rotten thing, — upheld by prejudice, and nicknamed a constitution!!"

"Hear, hear, hear!" ran through the assembly, though scarcely above a whisper. The orator rising with his subject, exclaimed, — "The right hand of justice, my united friends and patriots, is unmuffled; — the sword of state, which had rusted in her keeping, falls from it, — and shall be replaced by the weapon of avenging liberty!!"

Here he drew forth a dagger from beneath his coat, and exalted it in his hand. Enthusiasm spread through the dark ranks, and with more

than catholic devotion, did the grim-visaged conclave bend before the elevated emblem of assassination.

"The reign of prejudice is past,"—continued the orator;—"priests and their mummeries have had their day,—and are set in darkness. The terrors of conscience are shadows, that disperse before the energies of regenerated man, and we are no longer to be deterred by childish bugbears,—invented for our subjugation,—from taking the balance into our own hands, and sweeping CORRUPTION from the face of the earth!!"—(Groans of admiration.)—

"Here are the lists of the proscribed, ye regenerated men, (pointing to a volume on the table.) It is a new red-book, and a RED-book they shall find it in the day of retribution!—when he who feels compunction—or remorse,—in sending home the vengeance of an insulted,—trampled,—and outraged people—to the hearts of their tyrants,—is unworthy himself to live.—Let him die the death—"

"Let him die," was re-echoed in hollow murmurs.

"There are none, here," cried the speaker; "none, who will shrink in the day of trial."

"None," was the awful response.

"The day is at hand," continued he exultingly — "the day is dawning upon the fate of THOUSANDS — who now sleep secure over the mine, that is about to burst, — and hurl them to destruction. But, my friends —" and here the orator seemed to collect himself, — and to subdue his feelings to the grave importance of his subject; — "but, my friends, — caution and policy must be our guides to light the train; — we must try our force, before we apply it. — Our agents are at work in the remotest corners of the country; — superstition is fast undermining, among the most bigotted; — and the enthusiasts of religion are the first to pursue their enthusiasm into the temple of truth — into *our* sacred temple! — THEY HATE ESTABLISHMENTS! — WE foment the hate — and after a purification, — to which our disciples know well how to submit them, — their preachers are as incapable of re-converting them, as the dumb dogs of the established mummery themselves! The leaven is working, my friends, — aye, and working rapidly; — it has leavened the mass in the north, — and the harvest is ripe; but we must make sure — before we put our sickles in," (raising again his poinard;) "the

names of your leaders must be kept free from suspicion;—we may *openly* preach LIBERTY and REFORM, and the blood-suckers cannot reach us, while juries hear us recommend peaceable and orderly conduct; but when the glorious day arrives,—when Britain rises to new glory, and a new birth;—when the reptiles,—the vermin,—the high,—and the highest, are swept away,—sifted,—fanned,—purged,—annihilated,—and the vapours of their blood exhaled, *then*, then—my champions of liberty,—shall the SUN OF GLORY arise unclouded, and shine upon the path,—which superstition,—bigotry,—and despotism,—have so long obscured from our view."

The assembly was agitated, like a sea broken up by the sweep of a coming storm—it rolled deep—dark—and ominous—through which,—like a watery sun,—the ghastly smile, of restrained triumph, beamed cold,—and almost livid, on the quivering cheek of PATRIOTISM!"

It is not to be supposed that our hero sat very patiently, under the trial of temper and principle—to which he stood pledged. More than once, he had actually raised his voice in indignant reply, to the cool atrocity of the speaker; but it was lost, in the more powerful tones of

triumphant approbation; and the imploring looks and signs of his companion restrained him from any immediate repetition of his temerity. The fact is, that this person was in reality not one of the initiated, and, owing to circumstances — not worthy a place in so grave a history, — had not been submitted to the masonic trial of his fidelity, which those who were thought worthy of the secret council, were compelled to undergo.

He was a man, whose hopes in life had been overshadowed by misfortune, and a government prosecution, for some misdemeanor in the way of business, had soured his mind, and embittered his future prospects; he had become a sectarian from no better motive, than a dislike to every thing which owed its protection to government. The conversation of artful and designing men, who knew what foundation they had to build upon, — easily convinced him, that, as he admitted religion being supported by the state, was of course only a state fiction, so — the laws being bottomed on the same principle, were merely upholden for the purposes of venality and corruption. He became a bankrupt and a patriot at the same moment; he entered zealously, or rather desperately, into the schemes

of the reformers, and, adopting their language, so far imbibed their principles, as to wish for the overthrow of existing things — which, in the magic lantern of his political show-men, appeared to consist of a loathsome mass of putridity and disease, which it was absolutely necessary to purge off, for the safety of the body politic; — but Joel Bent, —for that was his name, —had not forgotten that he was a man, — and was by accident — less an infidel than a sceptic. He was, in short, one of a multitude, — a man of stronger passions than intellect, — and, having stept out of the right path, had neither resolution, nor knowledge sufficient, to retrace it by himself; — no one was at hand to help him, and he had gone on instinctively from bad to worse. His zeal, which was only temper, — was excited, and kept alive by the reformers, and his qualifications were considered sufficient for the rank of adept in the revolutionary STAR CHAMBER. The failure of an appointment alone, had postponed the awful ceremony of his initiation, from which he certainly would have shrunk, when he found — it was A LEAGUE OF BLOOD.

The secrets of the prison-house, — breathed now as it were in the very sanctuary of mysticism,

— occasioned therefore, nearly as formidable a tumult in his own breast, as in that of our hero himself; and, knowing the consequences of detection, he very naturally trembled under the apprehension of any indiscretion on the part of his companion. He had brought him with him, for the sole purpose of having his arguments, — which had somewhat staggered his conviction, — properly confuted by those master spirits, who were employed in the various sittings, throughout the metropolis, to keep up the necessary degree of irritation among the multitude of their instruments. — To the few only were entrusted, the means — never very scrupulously examined in the tumult of insurrection, — by which the great, and final blow was to be struck.

He had endeavoured to convey, by a few significant hints, to our hero, the real state of things; but his fears, and even Pen's sense of the hazard he ran by a rash exposure of his principles in such a place, and at such a moment, were scarcely sufficient to restrain the impetuosity of the latter. When the ebullition of his contempt and indignation rose to the tip of a tongue, — so unused to discipline, and so little subject to restraint, — he audibly groaned in

spirit, — more than once during the president's oration.

Several members now delivered their sentiments, and suggested expedients. A patriotic turncock undertook to cut off all supplies of water, and a beetle-browed lamplighter — who had lost a contract by the introduction of gas-lights into his district — pledged himself to ensure darkness at any given moment of time. A zealous knight of the shoulder-knot, who had suffered some indignities from a placeman, — who had reflected upon his honesty, in refusing to give him a character — laid open certain ministerial expedients, — gleaned from cabinet dinners by his brethren, — and gave some very interesting details communicated to a political society, of which he was a member, by those who were well acquainted with the secrets of their masters, and were ready to impeach them, when Astræa should again revisit the earth.*

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* It is scarcely worth mentioning; but the fact is, that this portion of our history, including *the detail* in the scene which follows, was written sometime previous to the capture of Thistlewood, and his gang of conspirators. The compiler of these important memoirs trusts that he may be believed when he adds — that he never possessed the advantage of his hero having been *initiated* in these "sacred mysteries," and that consequently, he cannot be suspected of having turned king's evidence.

The president listened to the suggestions of all with an affectation of urbanity, which, as it spread itself over his rigid features, seemed so out of place, that it might have been mistaken for a spasm — rather than the index of his mind. He rallied only those, who spoke of moderation, — of which, however, it must be confessed, — no very prominent instances occurred, to break in upon the general sentiment. The nearest approach to such a sentiment betrayed itself, in the doubts expressed by a cashiered exciseman, (who, having been a placeman, was rather jealously eyed by some of his colleagues), when he proposed a pledge from their leaders, — visible and invisible, — that they would not usurp and abuse the power, when they got it into their own hands. Even the philosophy of the president was not proof against an insinuation — so groundless, — and so unfitting a patriot leader, — who was ready to lay down his life for the people!

The marked contempt of the meeting, having been as loudly expressed as the solemnity of its proceedings would permit, the president was satisfied with the novel and appalling intimation, that "suspicion ever haunts the guilty mind." The poor exciseman had nearly

lost his grade, when, with that promptitude which is ever the accompaniment of an intrepid spirit, he rose from his seat, and with a vehemence too earnest to be mistaken, and too voluble to be interrupted, swore, that he was ready *to prove his innocence*, and at that very moment to blot out the bare insinuation, by plunging this (a clasp knife which he pulled from his pocket) in the heart of that arch traitor Lord ———. *

A general murmur of approbation arose, — and although the achievement would have been "a consummation most devoutly to be wished," it was negatived by a large majority of voices, who thought it — premature. "No," exclaimed the president, "citizen Keg has proved himself to be A MAN, and worthy to be among the first, and foremost, of PHILANTHROPISTS. — Oh, my friends, (with a spasmodic affection, intended for the pathetic), how the feelings of our regenerated nature shrink from the sufferings of an oppressed people! How appalling to our *finest sensibilities*, the infliction of tyranny — torture — and gagging bills, — to suppress and keep down the genuine spirit of liberty, and fraternal love!! Oh, my fellow patriots, sharpen the edge of

* !!!

your zeal, by looking on those blood-thirsty relentless villains, who usurp our rights — and trample on the finer feelings which *some* great first cause has implanted in heroic bosoms! Why are WE, whose pulses throb with the native spirit of freedom, even to the bursting our very heart-strings, — why are we pent up, as it were, within these walls, and whispering our grievances, — when we should be redressing them? Citizens, — countrymen, — patriots, — Britons — arm — arm — here is a breast of steel to confront hosts of hireling butchers! — the glow of patriotic ardour burns within me, and bids me face danger with a heroism and self-possession, — which TYRANTS and BIGOTS can never feel! Oh, that the miscreant tribe had a single neck, — that at a blow — we might cut off THE HEAD OF CORRUPTION!" "Hear, hear," resounded through the assembly, roused to enthusiasm.

"Oh, my brave comrades, that we had our enemies within our grasp, — that we had them *here* — *here*, man to man — reform and virtue grappling with the blood-sucking tyrants — the sons of liberty, strong in the energy of their feelings, — brave, — resolute, — irresistible, with the cowardly, base grovelling creatures of des-

potism !" — " Hear, hear," broke forth in loud acclamations. — " HEAR," cried a single voice in the succeeding pause — " Seize them, seize them; secure the outer doors," were cries that burst upon the astonished ears of the magnanimous president, and the body of gallant patriots! Doors were heard, yielding to the impetuous rush, and the glare of approaching lights shone freely through the enlarging crevices of the principal entrance to " Cato's little senate."

The orator thus indecorously interrupted, sunk back upon his seat, and seemed in the act of fainting; the coward fear of guilt was painted on the countenances of those, who had been most urgent in the pursuit of glory, — and still more would have presented itself to the perplexed observation of our hero, — had not the lights within the room been almost immediately extinguished. The conspirators seemed to have no inclination to face even the small force of hirelings and blood-suckers, likely to be brought against them, — each seeking safety for himself, pushed down or trampled his companions under foot, in order to reach the private doors, by which they had gained admission. In the mean while, the principal barrier had given way to the impetuosity of the assail-

ants, and an armed party of patrole and peace-officers actively pursued the flying squadrons.

Pen had resolved, at once, to surrender himself, and to give information respecting all that he had witnessed; but having time for recollection — as he had been fortunately placed in a dark corner of the large room, and the invading party had already advanced beyond the spot where he stood with his trembling companion — he felt that he might do his duty, without incuring the hazard and inconvenience of being dragged in the first instance, before a public tribunal, as a delinquent. Availing himself therefore of the obscurity, he ran towards a large window, which was at some height from the spot where he stood, and finding it yield to his efforts, opened it, and sprung up to it. It was too dark for him to discover the depth below — he paused within the opening, therefore, prepared either to take the leap, if necessary, or to retire by some other pass, should any present itself to his view.

In the meanwhile, he perceived that several of the reforming members were in safe custody; and as he saw some of the officers turning round, as if to conduct their prisoners back in the direction of his quarters, he raised himself

on his legs to prepare for the leap, or to drop himself on the outside; his purpose was precipitated by the sudden cry from several voices in the same instant, of "Look to the window, look to the window; at your peril let Brown escape." "Brown, Brown," was re-echoed from the crowd, and a shot passed over Pen's head, just as he made a desperate spring, — which landed him safe upon the roof of a house, the tiles of which rattled down in a shower, to a depth below.

Figures appeared to flit about the window above, — and the cry of "Brown, Brown," accompanied by several more shots — discharged, luckily for our hero and our history, in an opposite direction, — assailed his ears. He felt the horror of his situation, and would rather have faced, than flown from the danger, had there been any practical means of explanation at hand. As it was — he was compelled to lie *perdue*, convinced that the very sound of his voice would be the signalof death. As he lay stunned by his fall, and apprehensive of the consequences, if he should move from his position, he began, as usual, too late, to execrate his folly in having thus shared the full penalty of guilt, which he had never incurred.

But his reflections were of no long duration, for they were almost immediately interrupted by a female voice within the room,—whose casement our hero's head, to a certain extent, had fractured and displaced, and at the same time occupied the space it had forced. His legs were elevated above his body on the inclined plane of an opposite roof; his body lay across a gutter,—and his shoulders and head were partly within the frame of the broken casement. "Merciful heaven!" exclaimed the person within, "what is all this firing and shouting?" "It's the club at Mason's," answered another woman; "I thought it would come to this,—with their night meetings, and cabals, and plots."

"I am sure," said the first voice, "I heard a smash among some of these garret windows."

"It's a monstrous shame," replied the other, "to fire into honest folks' houses, when they might be in their beds and asleep, just thinking of nothing at all; and—"

"Oh, heart!" cried the first voice, almost fainting; "if here is'nt a bloody head thrown into the window!"

"A what?"

"Help! help!" screamed the other, running down stairs.

"Help! help, indeed!" cried poor Pen, in an under tone; whose unfortunate head, — which was always leading him into scrapes, — he endeavoured to turn, in order to secure the sympathy of the persons within; — "for heaven's sake, my good friends, make no noise — bring no light; but help me in at the window."

"What are you? — who are you?" exclaimed the woman; "what d'ye do there?"

"Hush, hush! you will betray me. I am an honest man, you need have no fears; if you give the alarm, I am lost."

Pen now having looked up to the window, through which he had escaped, perceived that it was no longer in possession of his pursuers. He, therefore, took courage to rise from his prostrate position; and having acquainted the woman with sufficient particulars of the predicament in which he stood, to induce her to admit him, — she good-naturedly offered him shelter.

His eyes, at this moment, were attracted by a sudden burst of light from below, occasioned by the officers having found access to a back court, upon which the window opened; and he quickly perceived, that had he been

on the spot — where those gentlemen were now looking for him, — they would probably have scarcely found him worth their finding, — for it was at a depth, which would have effectually secured any radical in the three kingdoms, from again interrupting the peace of society, — and, of course, from giving any further trouble to the officers of peace.

Pen shuddered, when he reflected upon the narrow escape he had made; and now, for the first time, recollected the several flights of stairs by which he had ascendedin to the Pandæmonium of reform. He felt that, had he attempted it in day-light, he must have missed his footing; and nothing but the violence of the spring, which the cry, — denouncing him by his assumed name, — had driven him without reflection to make, — could have cleared the gulf, which lay between the two buildings. Had he dropped, as a man of more caution and circumspection than himself would have done, this must inevitably have been the last page of our labours. As it was, he leapt "as was his wont," in the dark; and, for once, — he beat the plodders hollow.

The woman, whose fright had carried her

down stairs,—luckily found no one at hand to succour her, in clearing up the mystery of the bloody head; which, — as she saw none of its other appendages, — she concluded had parted company, with its body. Hearing, however, the pacific tone of conversation passing above, her native humanity, which fear only had suspended, led her to rejoin her friend, and afford any assistance which might be required. She had her foot upon the stair, in order to re-ascend, when a fellow-lodger from the floor beneath, (for she was tenant only of the second floor and garret,) came running up, and with terror painted in her countenance, gave notice, that the officers of justice were searching every house in the court, in pursuit of a prisoner, who had made his escape,—declaring, that they knew he was concealed, somewhere, hereabouts!

She had scarcely concluded, when a violent knocking was heard at the house door. and away ran the informant to await the examination of her premises. The other as quickly mounted the garret stairs, satisfied at once, of the nature of the vision, she had seen. She arrived, just as Pen had persuaded her companion, to suffer him to pass through the house; but the information, which was quickly conveyed to our

hero, rendered a prompt change of measures expedient. They were still in the dark, save when a flitting moonlight occasionally threw a ray across the chamber. What was to be done? Pen's head had received several cuts in his fall, and one bled pretty freely, so that the handkerchief which was bound round it, — in consequence of his previous accident, —was very bloody, and gave him altogether a very formidable, as well as a suspicious appearance. They now distinctly heard the officers below stairs, and were in momentary expectation of their appearance in the higher regions; but at this instant, a new bustle seemed to arise, and a cry, "To the other house!—the other house!" was followed by the clatter of feet down stairs, and the shutting of the street-door.

The good woman, who had brought the first intelligence, again descended; and quickly returning, desired our hero to follow her without hesitation or noise. Conveying him into a back room on the floor below, she informed him, that the woman who lodged under her, had, — she knew not why, —misled the runners, —by assuring them, that such a man as they described had forced his way through the garret-window, and

meeting her on the stairs, had prayed her to save his life, by letting him out at the street-door — that she, hardly knowing what she did, had not been proof against his entreaties; but that before she closed the door, she perceived the officers entering the court, (which was a *cul de sac*); and that the man in despair — had rushed into the opposite house, the door of which stood open.

Pen was perfectly satisfied this could not be true; at least, the first part of the story; but he had neither time nor materials for sifting the matter further, for he was scarcely lodged in the apartment of his protectress, before they heard a man rush up the garret stairs, — and in a moment after, the glass casement dashed with violence on the floor. The cause was soon explained — the lodger who had given notice of the approach of the officers, was secreting a husband, who had rendered himself obnoxious to the laws; and the expedient, by which she hoped to gain time for his safety succeeded at the very moment when she gave him up for lost. He made his escape by the very window through which Pen had entered, and being well acquainted with the *trans-pantile* country, set his pursuers at defiance.

The consequences were easily anticipated. The return of the officers, and a more minute

search would inevitably follow the detection of the imposition; and all retreat was cut off from our unfortunate hero, who might as well surrender himself at once, as venture again upon the *terra incognita*, which had brought him into such jeopardy just before.

Women are ever more apt at expedients, than the wisest of those who call themselves, their lords and masters; and Pen's hostess immediately suggested his jumping into a bed which stood ready prepared, and near which, a light from a half open door now discovered to him, he was standing. She took his great-coat and the bloody handkerchief from his head, together with his cravat; and throwing over his neck a woman's shawl, placed one of her daughters' caps upon his head, and covered him up with the bedcloths.

The cravat, handkerchief, and coat, she carried up stairs, and left the latter on the leads, outside of the window, whilst she dropt the others in the chamber, just within it. Thus prepared, she gave Pen his cue; and desired him to recollect, he was her sick daughter, — Nancy; and on no account to open his lips. As an instance of prompt obedience, — he opened them with an exclamation, occasioned by the light flashing more

strongly upon the good woman's countenance, as she opened the door of the adjoining room.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed he; "am I again indebted to the care and kindness of Mrs. Weston?"

"Hush! hush!" cried Mrs. Weston, — for Pen was perfect in his recognition; — "speak lower — who in the name of wonder are you?"

"Who! who but Pen — "

"Who!" exclaimed the woman, forgetting her own precaution.

"Why, Brown — plague take the name — he — to whom you were so kind in Newgate!"

"Humph!" ejaculated her companion, who had silently witnessed the scene; and began now to fear she was really implicated, with some notorious offender.

"Is it possible!" cried Mrs. Weston. "What! my good, kind sir, — again involved!"

"On my soul, I am innocent — now at least," answered Pen; who was proceeding, with his wonted candour of communication, when loud noises, and confusion arising from the lower apartments, convinced them the party was returning.

The friends separated in order to take up

their several positions, as had been hastily agreed upon. — Pen lay snug, — and it is a question with him, even to this hour, — whether his mind was more occupied with the terrific, — or the ludicrous, in the mixed scene he was now performing. He was at all events, however, more struck by the curious coincidence, of falling, as it were from the clouds, under the protection of the only being, perhaps in the boundless metropolis, who would have felt an interest in doing him a kind office, — than by all the difficulties, his inconsiderate adoption of a plan, — proposed by one who had appeared to be an utter stranger to him, — was likely to involve him.

He heard the officers enter the adjoining room — and whilst his kind hostess was endeavouring to divert their attention, he was near enough to observe, that they omitted to search neither closet, press, nor corner, likely to afford a hiding-place, to the person, of whom they were in search.

Pen felt *rather* uncomfortable, however, when the officers desired her to open the door of the room, in which he lay. — In vain she remonstrated against the indelicacy, of intruding into the chamber of her sick daughter. They per-

sisted — and our hero saw two or three grim-visaged gentlemen, who followed each other into the apartment, — observing, " that sick chambers were not the most uncommon depositories of such patients as they came to attend;" —which joke, was followed by a laugh, in which Pen certainly felt no disposition at the precise moment, to join.

" Come, young lady, — if such ye be, don't ye be faint-hearted, — we've no quarrel with the fair sex — ye're sure now, you've no sweetheart under the bed, — hey ?" — and down knelt the party to ascertain the point, — when poor Mrs. Weston, dreading that their respect for the fair sex, might not screen her *protegé* from too minute an inspection, gave the pre-concerted signal to her female companion, who, — rushing into the room, screamed out,—that an ill-looking man in a great coat, and a bloody handkerchief round his head, had just rushed past her on the stairs, and was making his escape,— she was sure, out of the back garret window !"

" That's he, by the Lord, Harry !" cried the leader of the searching party. — " It's Jack Brown, to a T. — Off, my lads — mount, and cock your pistols — he's game — he has killed

his man already," — and up flew the gang after their leader.

Mrs. Weston, stared at Pen, — who had acknowledged the name of Brown, and she had not heard his real one, in her former attendance upon him — but Pen was not in a situation either to notice her astonishment, or to relieve her from it, if he had, — for he himself was equally struck with the annunciation of the peace officer, that he was in pursuit of a person — of the name of Brown, who had killed his man. — This again brought to his recollection the detection of his person, in the seditious meeting, and the consequent pursuit, from which he had so far escaped.

He could no longer doubt, that he was indeed a murderer; and that Lord Killcullane's relations were vindictively pursuing him. — The horror of his crime smote upon him, and he shuddered, as he recurred to the precipitancy, with which he had been hurried on to the commission of it. — "Oh, my God!" he cried in agony, — "I am indeed guilty of man's blood!"

"Horrible, horrible!" exclaimed the almost fainting Mrs. Weston, whilst the woman who

had been her companion during the preceding scenes; groaned out, " We are undone, neighbour Weston, if we harbour a murderer; — the law'll make we, his complices. — Lord a mercy on us! I know sure, what I say." Here the searching party were heard descending the garret stairs, swearing at their disappointment; but giving and receiving orders for the renewal of the pursuit.

" We must give him up," said the woman.

" Never, never!!" exclaimed Mrs. Weston. " If I die, I will save him." — The woman was about to reply, but the good hostess rushing between her and the door, stood on the threshold as if to receive the officers, and began talking in a loud tone of voice in order to drown the purpose of her companion. " Well, gentlemen, kind gentlemen, have you found the ruffian? is he on the house top? — is he —"

" No d——him," cried the man, " he has gi'en us the slip; but we have agot his skin," holding up Pen's great coat and handkerchief, — " and shall soon fit him I'll be bound. — Off, Nab, to Ball's Court, — and you, Bullface, to the back lane. The scent lies warm; we shall catch him in his layer. Off, I say;" — and without re-

entering the apartment, the party rushed down stairs, and left the house, without giving any further trouble to our hero.

Mrs. Weston threw herself into a chair, and covered her eyes with her hands. "Who would have thought it, — who would have thought it! Oh, sir, I considered you a pattern of goodness, and spoke of you to my poor Rose, — as an angel."

A soft, but melancholy voice called from the inner apartment, asking if "her mother were ill?"

No, my child, stay where you are, these are not scenes for thee; thou hast enough to weep for, continued she, in a milder and a lower tone. "Oh, sir, what could have tempted you to this terrible deed?"

"The devil, Madam, — and the devil only, I believe," cried Pen, starting up in his bed?

"Aye," muttered the old woman, who had first befriended him, and would then have betrayed him. "Aye, aye, that's the cant of 'em all; they follow their own vile vays, and then throw the blame upon the devil, — as if the old gemman had'nt quite enow of his own sins, without being loaded with ev'ry cut-throat's and cut-purse's — as chuses to cast 'em off upon his shoulders."

"Woman!" exclaimed Pen, who did not chuse to be pronounced guilty upon any verdict but his own; "woman! d'ye know to whom you are talking?"

"Woman! aye, marry, do I, — to John Brown, the murderer;" and slapping the door, that brought its rotten materials to a dangerous test, — left the room, and ascended to her own apartments, in which Pen had originally made his free entry.

Our hero now felt himself called upon, to afford some explanation of the circumstances, which had involved him in such perilous consequences, and sufficiently satisfied his kind protectress, that he was not quite so black — as the devil's advocate, who had just left the room, supposed him to be. He was about to extricate himself from the bed, and, having thanked Mrs. Weston for all her charitable exertions in his favour, — to seek out his lodgings, where he might repose himself, and gain some relief from the intolerable fatigue, and headache, which the wounds and anxiety of his late campaign, had occasioned.

She, however, reminded him, that the watchmen were now crying the hour of midnight, and that, having neither hat nor coat, he could not pass through the streets at such a time, and

in his present condition, without the hazard of being involved in fresh difficulties and dangers. When to this was added, the probability that some of the officers, or their runners, might still be lurking in the neighbourhood, the argument was irresistible.

She advised him to undress, and settle himself comfortably in the bed, which was perfectly at his service; and having a little fire still remaining in the adjoining room, — she went out to prepare some tea for him, which, she acknowledged, was the only refreshment it was in her power to offer. Nothing, however, could have been more seasonable to our suffering hero, who gratefully accepted the proffer: and having availed himself of it, — in due time tucked himself up in bed, and not having leisure to be restless, was soon in a sound sleep, without the smallest apprehension or qualm upon his conscience, — that he was occupying the only bed the poor woman, and her daughter possessed, upon which to rest their own sorrowing, and wearied heads. Pen, however, did not know this, or probably he would not only have not slept so soundly, — but not have slept at all.

CHAPTER V.

Our hero woke not until roused by the sound of voices in the adjöining apartment, which, after some half visions of doubt, and uncertainty, brought him to a sense of his situation, and with it to a recollection of all he had suffered, and all that had been done for him, on the preceding evening. The voices had ceased,—and Pen raising his head, called out to Mrs. Weston, by name, requesting to speak to her.

"What voice is that?" exclaimed some one within the apartment.

"Hush, hush!" Pen heard his hostess answer; "I must not, — cannot tell you, sir."

"I insist," was the reply; but something was said, in return, to pacify the questioner, which Pen could not hear.—When, however, Mrs. Weston came cautiously into the room, not through the door of communication, but by that which opened on the landing-place, he anxiously

demanded in his turn, — who it was whom he had heard speaking in the adjoining room?"

"It is a stranger to you, sir; pray ask no questions; I am not at liberty to answer you; I entreat your silence; your own safety, — and mine, perhaps, — depends upon it."

Pen was reasonable, which was no doubt occasioned by the discipline of the preceding day. He lowered his voice, but again whispered a request to know, *who* the person was, — as he felt *assured* he knew the voice.

"He is a kind benefactor to me, and mine," was her answer, "and I shall incur his displeasure if I mention it."

"Be it so," said Pen, — not very well satisfied to have his curiosity, which had certainly been excited, thus left — ungratified. He might, however, be mistaken in a voice; and having enquired the time of day, found that he had nearly slept the twelve hours round. He resolved immediately to dress himself, and proceed to his lodgings.

Mrs. Weston informed him, that the gentleman in the next room was just departing, — and requested him to remain quiet for a few minutes.

Pen could offer no objection, and began, as

usual, to recal all the errors and misfortunes of his short life, and to arraign himself *in foro conscientiæ*, — condemning or acquitting upon each separate charge, as the evidence appeared to him, to warrant. He was not disposed, therefore, to listen to what was going forward in the adjoining room; but it is not to be imagined, that the partitions of the second floor of a house, in a blind alley, near Smithfield, were calculated, or intended for privy councils, or the discussion of secret interests.

Pen, therefore, could not, — unless he had stopped his ears with cotton, which he would never have thought of, even had the expedient been at hand, avoid catching an occasional sentence of the conversation that was going forward, whenever the energy, or warmth of the principal interlocutor gave it a fuller breath, than seemed to be agreeable to Mrs. Weston, — whose supplications were evidently employed to check it.

The voice which from the first, he seemed to recognize, was generally restrained, but it at length caught, and fixed his attention, in spite of all the rules of good breeding.

"Why you should conceal his name — and

from me, too.—The answer, or plea, was returned too indistinctly to be heard by Pen.

"I have my suspicions, and if they are founded by —." Here again the conversation was interrupted, but renewed in a more subdued tone.

"My reasons, madam!" at length burst forth, as if the provocation was too great to be resented in a piano tone, "my reasons, madam, are such as your imagination cannot reach;—they are all-powerful — my life — my happiness — the life and happiness of the being I most prize under heaven—." Here again the voice was quenched.

Again it rose,—"I must and will be satisfied. I have had intelligence from the country—."

"To-morrow, then," was the female reply. But a sweeter and more plaintive voice awakened Pen's attention.

"Oh, mother, think of his injunctions."

"What are his injunctions? what have they done for you?" was part of the observation which followed. "You cannot deny he was here last night!" broke, in an indignant tone, from the visitor.

"He was."

"Is he not in the house this moment?"

Pen started up in the bed.

"Indeed, indeed, he is not," answered Mrs. Weston.

"Then, why this mystery?—who is concealed in the next room."

Pen heard no more. The conversation lasted for a few minutes longer, when the visitor evidently rising to depart, said, emphatically, as the door creaked on its hinges, "My protection, madam, ceases, if further concealment is necessary. Tush, woman,—I will not be silent—if the villain is within hearing, let him hear my resolution;—I know him,—I have watched him—and he shall not escape me." The door shut with some violence, and Pen was in the act of rushing to the stair-case in order to avow himself to the man, who had thus declared himself his enemy,—when Mrs. Weston, just in time, ran between him and the entrance,—entreating him to desist, for that her all depended upon the gentleman who had just left the room.

"I know his voice," exclaimed Pen.

"Indeed, indeed, you do not, sir."

"I tell you, madam, it is that infernal —"

"It is no infernal — it is the best of human beings."

"The most depraved: — it is Major Irwine!"

The good woman testified the truth of the assertion by her looks; but still faintly denied it."

"How, madam, — has this artful man — this plunderer of Asia, — this—"

"Indeed, sir, you are deceived."

"No, madam, it is *you* who are deceived. — And this the betrayer of innocence — this —"

"Believe me, my good sir, you labour under some sad misapprehension, even if —"

"Even if I know the man! I know him well enough, to my cost — and so I fear do you."

"Not I, indeed: if it had not been for him, and for you, sir —"

"Couple us not together, madam, I shrink from the contact. He will persecute you, as he has done me, — until perhaps, like me — you will be driven to shed man's blood through his villany."

"What do I hear! — shed man's blood — he — the best — the mildest—"

"Mild, — good, — heard you not his cowardly threats against me, even in my situation."

"I repeat, my dear Mr. Brown, this is all a mistake; the gentleman who has just left the house, does not even know you."

"Not know me! did you not yourself hear him threaten me?"

"Indeed I did not. He suspected —"

"Aye, aye, suspected; — but did he not threaten, where he suspected, — and has he not hunted me down — persecuted —"

In thus giving way to his habitual impetuosity which twelve hours' sound sleep had restored to its pristine vigour, Pen was retracing the sources of his indignation against the Major; and whether he began to doubt the justice of imputing to him the guilt, in which his own rashness had involved him, or whether he could not recollect sufficient authenticated provocation on that gentleman's part, to warrant the character he was thus lavishly bestowing upon him, is not very necessary to determine. Certain it is, that he said little more upon the subject, which appeared so deeply to agitate

his kind hostess; but having dismissed her, he began to dress himself, and had proceeded as far as he was able, before he became fully aware of the inroads made upon his wardrobe. He first missed his cravat — then his coat, — and missing also a bell, where a bell had never existed; — it all at once occurred to him, that he must call in the aid of an ally.

He proceeded, therefore, into the next room, *en deshabille*, having previously announced his intention, by a gentle rap at the door, and began to consult with his friend, about what was to be done in this dilemma, when his eyes and attention were caught and arrested by an object, — if not the most fascinating to his imagination, — at least the most interesting, that could present itself to the view of a feeling and sensible mind.

Pale, and attenuated in form, sat a lovely girl in an old-fashioned arm-chair, supported by coarse, but clean cushions. Her blue eyes, almost concealed by their long dark lashes, were lifted for a moment upon his entrance, and then cast down, — as if attracted by some object her fancy had formed in the fire, beside which she sat.

Her countenance bespoke suppressed sensibility, and had the character rather, of habitual melancholy, than overbearing sorrow. It was sweet and plaintive, and such as an angel might be supposed to assume, when ruminating on the cares and crimes of fallen man. She was neatly, but plainly dressed; and a few dark auburn ringlets, which had strayed from beneath a plain cap, gave a grace to a head of which an artist might have made a study for a Madonna. But, alas! — it was the head of a magdalen, — and poor Rose Weston could not forget that it was so.

She took no notice of Pen Owen, after the first silent salutation, when her mother presented him as their friend, Mr. Brown. He gazed upon her in silent admiration; and it was some time before he either recollected he was standing in his undress, or that it was necessary to take measures for equipping himself.

He would have withdrawn again to his chamber, but Mrs. Weston requested him to remain where he was; and in answer to a sign from him, which she immediately understood, gently observed to him, that "he would not disturb poor Rose, God bless her, — for indeed

she attended of late to little, that was passing around her." The poor woman wiped away a starting tear, and Pen followed the direction of her eye.

He felt that he had no right to such an indulgence, and recurring to his own wants, asked, if it were possible to find any person to carry a note to his lodgings, for the supply of what he stood in immediate need.

Mrs. Weston left the room, to seek the woman who had aided to save,—and had nearly aided also — to betray him on the previous night.

It was not easy for Pen to withdraw his eyes from the interesting being, who sat the picture of patient suffering, before him; but the native delicacy of his mind, forced him from the position in which the poor mother had left him, which was directly in front of her child.

Walking, therefore, to the window, which had been opened to admit the fresher air into the confined apartment, and resting on his elbows, in his shirt sleeves, he meditated on the depravity of human nature, and the unfeeling selfishness of man, who could blight so fair and

sweet a blossom, and then leave it to perish, — to fade, — and die.

As his eyes wandered — not over infinite space, where indeed they might have lost themselves, — but over the very limited one, included within a double row of houses in a city alley — they were involuntarily attracted by two persons, whose eyes, in sympathy, were found to be in a direct line with his own. One pair he immediately recognized as appertaining to Major Irwine himself, who, with an extended hand towards him in an attitude of threatening indignation, uttered an exclamation, which reached the ears of our no less indignant hero, — denouncing vengeance on "a villain, whom he had at length detected."

"Yes, sir," cried the almost convulsed Major, raising his voice, "I have you now — past redemption;" — when seizing the arm of his companion, he walked briskly away. Pen called out to him to stop, in a voice of thunder, but in vain, — and turning round to pursue him, was making towards the door, when Rose Weston, whom his violence appeared to have roused, held out her arms, and cried, in a

plaintive voice, —" No, no, don't harm him, — don't hurt him."

"Who?" exclaimed Pen — "who?"

"Hush, hush, my good friend," cried Mrs. Weston, opening the door, — "what's the matter, — what has happened!"

"I know not," answered Pen, staring wildly. "I have seen that villain Irwine, and she, —that sweet, that fading flower, arrested me, as —;"

"Aye, aye," replied her mother, checking him; "pray do not alarm her. You are wrong, indeed you are mistaken — the poor girl means, alas," sobbed out the mother, "she means nothing."

"Don't cry, mama," said poor Rose, lifting her eyes, upon hearing her mother's sobs. "Indeed, indeed, I am very well; don't cry for me. You, — oh, sir," turning to Pen, as if she had seen him for the first time, — "oh, sir, do not vex mama, — she has vexations enough."

"Never, never, — thou fair drooping flower, — on my soul —."

"Nay, nay," cried the girl, with more energy than had yet marked what she said, "do not

swear; all men are not false, I will not believe it; but all men who swear—may be." Here a sigh broke from her, that would have melted a heart of stone.

"Oh, that the villain," exclaimed Pen, forgetting himself—"that the villain could have heard it!"

"Who!" exclaimed the wretched Rose, starting for the first time from her seat, into which she as instantaneosly fell back,—still, however, looking with a piercing eye upon Pen Owen's face. "Who?" she again repeated, but almost in a whisper, and sank, as if forgetful of the question, into her habitual posture.

"Is it possible," cried Pen, suppressing his voice, but incapable of checking his feelings; "is it possible," taking the weeping mother as far as possible from her child, "that the black-hearted Major is the betrayer of this angel? is it that —"

"Oh, sir, forbear to be so uncharitable; he is the most humane, generous —"

"D—— his generosity, madam; there's something under all this mystery, which I must develope. I know him to be—yes, madam,—

even now I saw him setting a spy upon your lodgings, — a watch upon your motions and mine."

"He has reason to be angry with us, — to suspect us, my dear sir," answered the poor woman; "we dare not tell him all, and he is entitled to it; but we are forbidden."

"Forbidden! by whom?"

"By ——."

"By whom, Mrs. Weston? I must know, for by all that is dear to me in life, I will right you, if you and that angel sufferer can be righted by an arm of flesh, and if not, I will pray for you, — kneel for you to the throne of mercy, and invoke curses on the villain who — "

"Hush, hush," cried Mrs. Weston, again interrupting him.

Pen at this moment felt that he had no business on earth, but to redeem this lost and suffering creature: he thought no more of his own dangers, — the alarm of pursuit, — his being apprehended as a murderer, — his, — yes, his love for Ellice Craig he *did* think of, and it was that love which seemed to identify her, — and every thing that was pure, and ami-

able, with the cause of afflicted loveliness before him. He had made up his mind: he did not know what to conclude concerning Major Irwine; but something more than an ordinary villain he felt he must be. — Him he determined to seek out, and to demand an explanation respecting his conduct towards himself, as well as the nature of his connexion with his hostess and her daughter.

"The black Major shall explain all this," cried he, going towards the window, to see if he had returned. "Madam, he has already driven me to desperation, and you to destruction, (whispering to his staring auditor,) — he is persecuting you — he is driving that child of misfortune, (pointing to the daughter,) to madness. He shall answer, — he shall atone for the evil he has perpetrated among his fellow-creatures, abroad and at home, — in — ."

"For heaven's sake, sir, have done — you will rob me of my best, — I had almost said my only friend. We had been houseless wanderers, but for the humanity — the charity of Major Irwine!"

"What! — he can feel for the havoc he has

committed: he can weep crocodile tears over the ruin, he has made. Madam, madam, — let me ask," going closer, and in a more firm but confidential tone, " why does he not marry her?"

" Marry whom, sir?— he —."

" Why not make the only reparation now in his power?"

Mrs. Weston recollected her suspicions respecting the sanity of our friend Pen in her former intercourse with him, and they were about to be renewed; but on his repeating the question, she felt that she might have misunderstood him; and asking again to whom he alluded, his reply, " Her betrayer to be sure," led her to reply — drawing closer to his ear, " He has faithfully promised, — indeed, indeed he has, — if we are secret, — he has been here, — but — "

" But what?" asked Pen.

" The poor child has heard that he is — that he must extricate himself from some other engagement."

" Another engagement!" exclaimed Pen; " no, no, that engagement shall be with me, —

I will unravel the mystery, — I will bring him a reckoning, — I — ."

" Indeed, my dear, kind friend, you do not know him."

" Not know him! must I repeat again and again, that it is *you* who do not know him. You shall see, and he shall feel, that I know him too well. But I will, — yes, I will forgive him all, if he will on his knees, and before heaven, acknowledge his duty there," pointing to Rose who sat now, with her eyes fixed upon him. She could only have heard what he said imperfectly, had she listened; but it was the energy of his manner which seemed to strike and arrest her attention. She appeared to be unconcerned in the conversation, even if any had reached her ear.

" Is he come?" she asked, in a meek voice.

" No, my angel, not yet; he fixed four o'clock, you know."

" Four! I forget how time goes now, — four o'clock." She looked at Pen again, and he thought her wishes asked a question, which he might anticipate. He put his hand to his fob, — but he had no watch. He looked to the

sun, which shone bright for the region of Smithfield, and observed that it could not be more than "one o'clock."

"A smile, which shone through a watery eye, seemed to thank Pen, for his ready attention to her wishes. His smile, in return, for a moment arrested her attention; but she again cast her eye down, and whilst the tear which had before started fell upon her cheek, she sighed, in a voice scarcely audible, "It was thus HE smiled!"

Mrs. Weston now informed Pen,—who could hardly be brought to listen to her,—that her neighbour was ready at the door, to take a note to his lodgings,—and having procured a slip of paper, he wrote, with a pencil, an order for what he wanted, and despatched the messenger to his landlady, whose name, by some accident, not necessary at present to be accounted for, he recollected to be—Grub,—the euphony, perhaps, had struck his ear, which was very musically constructed.

Pen sat silent, contemplating the scene before him, and pondering upon the means of bursting with effect upon Major Irwine, with the

information he now possessed of his baseness,—and made up his mind to wade through fire and water, to obtain justice for the injured Rose Weston.

He endeavoured, more than once, to draw his good hostess into some further details respecting the author of her misfortunes, and although she declined adding to what he already knew, her persevering defence of Major Irwine only served to convince him that she was a slave to his tyranny, and awed into this defence of his conduct and character by the apprehension of vengeance, so intelligibly pronounced in his late parting words. — "Good heavens," he almost audibly ejaculated, as he started from his seat,—"that such a piece of dried parchment should have so fascinated a being like this, as to make her forget every other duty."

A tap at the door disturbed these reflections, and announced the arrival of his messenger; and putting his hand in his pocket, to reward her for her trouble, he found, that he had not a sous. — He apologized for the omission, and very naturally accounted for it, by a reference to his adventures on the preceding night. —

Retiring therefore to his chamber to equip himself — he began to reflect upon the hazard he ran of being discovered, by appearing in the clothes he usually wore, having lost the equipments, provided by his friend Wettenhall, for the campaign — in the very first action. — He had however no alternative; and had scarcely armed himself, like a second Quixote, for the purpose of pursuing his adventures, when Mrs. Weston knocked at the door, and, on being admitted, presented a face of horror, to which, none but the pencil of Fuseli, could have done justice. — She was pale — she was ghastly — and hastily throwing herself into a chair, fell back in it. Beckoning the astonished Pen towards her, she asked him in a voice, scarcely articulate from agitation, whether, "he was really guilty of the deadly crime, with which he was charged?"

"What crime?" he demanded.

"Murder!" was her reply.

Pen, shocked at having his act so unceremoniously classed, started back; but recollecting himself, answered with a sigh.

"I certainly have — killed a man!"

"And is not that murder!" exclaimed the poor woman. "Oh! what will become of you — what will become of me and mine?"

"Be pacified, my good Mrs. Weston," cried Pen, "I only — yes — by heaven, it *was* murder, cool deliberate murder. — What had I to do with shooting a man, for walking in Kensington Gardens?"

"Shoot!"

"Yes, yes, I deserve all that can follow."

"Well then, — the Lord have mercy upon you, for you have not long to live. — The blood-hounds are after you — you cannot escape."

"I don't wish to escape — no, no," cried Pen, in an agony of mixed feeling. — "What have I to expect in life?" Then turning to the poor woman, who seemed to feel more for his situation, than he did himself, he continued in a milder tone, "Do not, do not, my good friend, worry yourself on my account; you have cares enough of your own. — I shall stand my trial, — I always intended it."

"Stand your trial! — rather fly while you have it in your power. Here, take my clothes — disguise yourself; here are a few pounds; the Major —"

"Hell and fury, woman! the Major!—D'ye think, I'll take the wages of prosti——, hold, hold," as if checking the base insinuation of another, rather than himself—"no, my good mother, for such you have proved yourself to me,—the Major shall answer—"

"Answer!—but who shall answer for thee, when the laws of God, and thy country."

"I fear nothing,—my conscience, not they will condemn me."

"Your conscience! true, true, unhappy young man! what could have tempted thee to such an act? Oh, who will trust to looks again My poor Rose!—what are looks, what are vows? I would have trusted my life, my child, and fortunes, when they were at their height, to *thee* in a wilderness!"

"And so,—so indeed might you now," cried Pen, almost softened to the weakness, he had laboured to support, "I only acted in self-defence."

"Oh, say not so; say nothing. I wish to think you innocent; to see you safe is all my prayer." At this moment, the door of the other apartment opened, and Rose Weston, evidently

alarmed by the vehemence of her mother's exclamations, stood on the threshold, and, as if awaking out of a trance, in which her whole faculties had been absorbed, she burst into a flood of tears, and rushed to her mother's arms.

"My child," exclaimed the agitated mother, "do not alarm yourself. — I am well, and I thank God you can weep now: — weep freely."

Pen recollected her former prescription; but the scene was too solemn for any thing like levity to dwell for a moment upon it. Rose turned her head, as it lay upon her mother's breast, and, with an imploring look at Pen, seemed to deprecate his repeating any offence he might have committed against her parent. He understood her silent appeal, and, in the most soothing manner, requested Mrs. Weston to dismiss him, and his affairs, from her mind.

"Did you say," whispered Rose with a look of terror, which seemed to have been called up by a sudden recollection, "did you say he was murdered?"

"No, my child; it is no such thing."

"You said so," repeated the daughter, as if

the impression became stronger on her mind; and she looked earnestly and piteously in Pen's face.

"Oh!" screamed she, perceiving an extraordinary degree of agitation in his countenance, "you have murdered him, you have destroyed him!" Then pausing, she raised herself from her mother's bosom, "Oh, why," said she, weeping, to her mother, "why did you consent? He might not be so guilty;—he might have relented."

"Indeed, indeed, my beloved," cried the mother, drawing her to her embrace, "you mistake — he — "

"Hush, hush, mother; do not mention him. He said, you know, that if we betrayed him, — his life might be endangered."

"Name him to me," exclaimed Pen, "and I will draw his life's blood, rather than — "

"Help, help, — there, — there, for the love of mercy — his murderer is upon him," screamed the distracted girl, who again hid her face, half fainting, on her mother's breast.

"You should not be so violent, my dear sir; — see how you distress the dear child."

"No! — don't be violent with him," whispered the daughter, as she turned again to Pen, who could not restrain his tears.

"Oh, sir," — whispered Mrs. Weston, as she looked on him, — "how with such feelings could you be guilty — ?"

"Is he guilty?" demanded Rose.

"Yes;" — cried Pen's messenger, who had entered the room without ceremony; — "see here, neighbour Weston, what I told you of," — opening and spreading out a large printed sheet of paper, on which were distinctly to be read at a mile distance, — "ONE HUNDRED GUINEAS REWARD! — MURDER! — JOHN BROWN! — Pen started back with horror and surprise. — Poor Rose looked first at him, — then upon the paper — and then at her mother, as seeking for information.

Mrs. Weston could give none; — she burst into a new flood of tears — and led her daughter into the other room, whither she was followed by her officious neighbour, who evidently declined remaining alone in the room with a murderer. Pen threw himself, in despair, upon the bed, — he could scarcely believe he was

awake. — He taxed himself with every act of imprudence, of which he had been guilty; and then murmured against a decree, which he pronounced to be inflicted with a too heavy hand, by the Supreme Disposer of events. — He recollected himself, — and falling upon his knees, — deprecated the vengeance of heaven.

He had, indeed, embrued his hands in the blood of a fellow-creature. — The Almighty had set his mark upon the crime, — and what law of man could wash it away? —Custom might reconcile it —justice might wink at it — society might sanction it — but conscience told him it was forbidden; — and that blood for blood, was the law of nature, that cried up to the very gates of heaven for justice.

"Let the law of man then," he cried, amid tears of remorse, "have its course, — it is fitting, that a sinner like myself, should have all the ignominy, as well as punishment of my crime. — I might palliate it to man, — I cannot reconcile it to my God; — but repentance may ensure,— even his pardon."

Mrs. Weston, had overheard him, — and though she could not fully comprehend, she

understood sufficient of what he uttered aloud in this soliloquy, to be sure that he was neither depraved, nor hardened. — She retired from the door, from the delicate apprehension of interrupting him, in which, she judged and felt as nicely as the most refined of her sex would have done, under the same circumstances.

After waiting ten minutes, during which she did not hear him either speak or move, she ventured to open the door, and, to her surprise and horror, found the apartment vacant. She called upon him, then checked herself, as she recollected the fatal name, to which so awful a notoriety now attached; but running up and afterwards down stairs, she found the street door of the house open, — and concluded, he had rashly ventured out, and would inevitably fall into the hands of justice.

Pen had, indeed, quietly let himself out and descended, on the conclusion of the soliloquy, we have just overheard, fully determined to spare his benevolent protectress, as well as himself, the distressing recapitulation of the dangers and horrors, by which he was surrounded. He passed along the crowded streets,

attracting no notice, and apparently without being watched, although he apprehended a thief-taker in every pair of eyes, that happened to fall within range of his own, and was almost prepared to surrender his person to any individual, who chanced to be standing still, or whose face did not bespeak the activity of business. A more serious cause of alarm occurred, however, as he advanced; for he saw groupes of twenty or thirty persons, at the several corners of the streets reading, some aloud, and some making their comments upon, large placards, offering a reward from the Secretary of State's office for the apprehension of JOHN BROWN, &c.

He contrived to reach his lodging without being intercepted, and having knocked at the door, which was opened by his landlady, he darted up stairs and felt himself once more at liberty, since he was within the walls of his own castle. The landlady, however, followed him, and, on pretence of stirring his fire, looked with the eyes of curiosity and penetration, upon the features and dress of our hero. He observed this, and asked her what she wanted. She replied, "she hoped no offence,

but that she had been kept up half the night, waiting for him, and must say it was hard for those who worked all day, to be kept out of their beds all night; — that she was a regular woman, and her family a regular family, and such doings were not at all in her way."

"Peace, peace, my good woman, it was an accident!"

"An accident, truly! What, I suppose, it was an accident that lost you your clothes; and —"

"It was! — Say no more about it, you shall be satisfied. I shall give you no more cause to complain;" then lifting up an ebony ink-stand that stood on the table before him, as if to shew he had some business to do, he stared, upon beholding several bank-notes; and, if the truth must be told, so did the honest Mrs. Grub, who knew no more of their being there than poor Pen himself, who thought, without thinking at all, that his pockets had been picked of all the wealth he possessed on earth.

"The deuce!" cried he, "what notes are these?" The question was not lost upon mine hostess.

"Oh, I dare say, my husband; I'll go and enquire your honoûr."

"No, no!" answered Pen; "I recollect now—here is the man's name upon them. I forgot—this is an unexpected turn of fortune; who knows—you may go, my good Mrs. Grub.

"May I," quoth the lady, who seemed to be unaccountably angry with our hero, for recovering his memory so inopportunely—and flung out of the room, muttering something about "being up to him," which Pen either did not hear, or did not regard; for he turned immediately to the table, to which he sat down, with a determination of arranging some plan of fixed conduct, in the present perplexed and embarrassed state of his affairs.

He, with some difficulty, obtained, in the course of the afternoon, a newspaper; in which he learned, that the Old Bailey sessions would commence in a few days. He took a sheet of paper, and entering into a statement of facts connected with the duel, addressed himself to the Lord Chief Justice of England; resolving to surrender himself on the Monday following, which was the day previous to the opening of the sessions. When he had finished the paper,

he threw himself back in his chair, and appeared lost in thought; which, considering the nature and bulk of the matter, which his reflections had to feed upon, was natural enough. How long this process of mental digestion lasted, is not very important to ascertain; suffice it to say, it was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Grub, with a second edition of unsavoury cutlets, which he felt it prudent to prefer, to more sumptuous fare abroad. She produced at the same time a letter, which she presented to him; saying, that a ticket-porter had just left it at the door.

"The devil take all ticket-porters!" exclaimed our hero, snatching it out of her hand.

Mine hostess sneered at the denunciation, against so innocent and useful a race of men. He observed not the sneer, but, following up the association thus suggested, he was not much surprised, at finding the present billet written in the same hand, as that which had been delivered to him in the presence of Major Irwine; he tore it open, and read as follows:

"The friend who has long watched over your interests as a guardian angel, again warns you to beware of impending danger. You were

enabled to avoid the snares laid for you on a former occasion; they encompass you in a tenfold degree at this moment; do not rashly encounter them. They are drawing more closely around you; and, beyond the present day, your fate will be no longer in your own hands. If you meet the arbiter of that fate again, you are undone. — YOU KNOW HIM; he is your persecutor; — but you cannot now avenge your wrongs upon him. If you are not infatuated, listen to the only voice, which, in solitude and confinement, can reach you. Return not, on your life, to the spot where you were seen this morning. You are a proscribed man, — and the sword of justice is suspended over you; you are no longer safe in this country. — Fly to Portsmouth; enquire for one Giles Grant, who lives on the Common Hard. If you want money, he will supply you; and will bear you to a place of safety. At the hazard of my life, perhaps, I have made this effort in your favour. Fail not as you value yours — nay, more, your character! — your honour!"

It is not to be supposed, that our hero read this paper in such a regular and orderly man-

ner as you, gentle reader, have been enabled to do; marking all the stops, and sounding every sentence, as if you had been employed as reading clerk in Parliament.

No! our friend Pen, as usual, snatched sentence by sentence, without waiting for conclusions, which his own imagination could draw quicker than the pen of the most ready writer. He raved at some, wept at others; and upon a re-perusal, or in connection with each other, he wept where before he had raved, and *vice versâ*. You may smile, my good readers, but say what you will, the letter was a puzzling and alarming sort of thing; and if it had been purposely written to inspire a man with apprehension and doubt, and to make him feel, as if an invisible hand was just setting fire to a train under the room, to blow him and his cares to atoms, in a moment,—it could not have been more skilfully planned.

But Pen did not reason like most men, or if he did, he had a way peculiar to himself, of laying down the premises, before he set about the process. The very insinuation that his character and honour were to be saved by an

ignominious flight, convinced him, in a moment, that *they* would suffer less, even if *he* were to suffer more, by remaining and facing his danger. He might be hanged, indeed, but that was a secondary consideration; and he was not to be deterred from what he considered right and proper to be done, by a bugbear. I have reason to believe, his imagination had been so fully employed upon other matters, that he never had pictured to himself the details of a modern execution; and it may have been with him, as an ingenious barrister observed to a *hanging* judge, that his lordship probably had never thought that there was any great pain or trouble in the operation of *sus. per coll.* As for Major Irwine, the very intimation that danger was to be apprehended from him, only served to exasperate his passions, and to determine him upon taking immediate measures, to set his utmost malice at defiance.

He concluded, that the warning given him by his timid guardian, (and who could it be, but his beloved Ellice Craig,) was to prevent a meeting with his enemy; and as he knew he was by appointment to be at Mrs. Weston's lodgings on the morrow, thither he most manfully deter-

mined to repair betimes, in order to confront him, and bring him to a final explanation.

At ten o'clock the next morning, accordingly, our hero left his apartment, and was descending for the purpose of proceeding direct to Mrs. Weston's lodgings, when he was intercepted by his landlady at the foot of the stairs, who expressed her surprise at his going out so early; which surprise was partaken, — but expressed in turn by Pen, in terms somewhat bordering upon indignation, — at the presumption on the lady's part; who was accordingly desired to mind her own business, and not to meddle with his incomings, or out-goings.

Pen was as unlucky in his landladies as in his ticket-porters.

She retorted, that it was her business to see after the conduct of her lodgers; and if she war'nt "pretty sure," very emphatically marked was the expression in voice and eye; "that Mr. Brown would soon be provided with another lodging, she would'nt put up with it."

"Woman, you are impertinent, and beneath my notice. I shall be back in a short time, and will settle with you. I sleep no more beneath your roof." So saying, our friend Pen walked off, without bestowing even a further reflection

upon the words or insolence of good Mrs. Grub.

Not so the lady.

"No! no!" quoth she, turning into her parlour; "you'll sleep no more here, I warrant you; nor any where else much longer. Here, Frank," calling up a boy, "do you go and follow this here Mister Brown, and see which way he goes. Be sure you don't miss him, young Careless; it'll be a good hundred pounds out of my way."— Off went the boy.— "Nanny, do you run to Tom Cribb's, and ask what the devil he's about. Tell him the bird's flown,—he should have been here by nine, as I told him. There's no trusting to these male creturs."

From the enemy's camp, proceed we to overtake poor Pen, who construed the incivility of his hostess into a mere ebullition of passion, at having the regularity of her hours broken in upon; and would as soon have suspected a woman,—had he troubled himself to suspect at all—of intending to blow up the King and Parliament, as of selling his blood for a reward. He walked on, not, however, entirely free from suspicions of others, who might in the way of business, be disposed to do him this good office;

but meeting with no interruption or impediment, had arrived within a few yards of the turning which led to Mrs. Weston's abode, when he perceived, at about thirty paces before him, a female form in an attitude of resistance, upon the step of a hackney-coach; — an arm from within evidently grasping one of hers; — and a person from without, as evidently forcing her forward into the carriage, the coachman on his box, — waiting the signal with uplifted whip, to start with the party, when all should be ready.

Pen, with the rapidity of lightning, was master of the whole business. — Rose Weston had been torn from her mother, and Major Irwine was the ravisher. — Two leaps brought him within the reach of one of the parties, although the door had been closed upon the victim, before his fist had brought an auxiliary — who was preparing to mount the box — to the ground. He grasped the handle of the door, — a voice of thunder from the opposite side of the coach commanded the coachman to drive on. The man whipped his horses into a canter, which nearly overset Pen, who still held the handle of the door in his grasp, and suffered himself to be dragged some yards — the glass

was let down, and his hand violently struck from within, the suddenness of which, made him to loose its hold; but at the same moment, a female voice caught and vibrated on the heart-strings of Pen Owen, calling upon him, by name, to save her. — It was ELLICE CRAIG! He flew — he caught again the door, and fixed his hand within, — he felt the power, — the strength, the energy of a giant. — At this instant, a blow from behind, felled him to the ground, — he was only snatched from beneath the wheel, in time to save him from being crushed, and reserved for sufferings, when he came to his recollection, — which I shall not venture to describe, or paint.

CHAPTER VI.

The imagination of the reader, with his knowledge of our hero's character, may enable him to conceive in some degree, what were his sensations when he awoke to the conviction, that he was in the hands of justice. He appealed in turn to each of the three persons, who were seated with him in a hackney coach. He swore to follow them peaceably to the world's end, if they would but allow him to pursue the coach, in which his Ellice had been carried off.—He promised them fortune, affluence, the mines of Golconda, if they would grant him, but half an hour's respite.

When, however, they laughed at his offers, and jested upon his sufferings, he denounced vengeance, and prepared to execute it, in a style, and with an earnestness, that they were compelled to fall upon him in a body,—and fixing handcuffs on his wrists, threatened him with even stronger measures, if he did not immediately submit.

Their threats were vain, his fury and violence encreased to absolute insanity; he roared, — he swore, — till the consciousness of his childish helplessness, brought a flood of tears to his assistance, and he fell on his knees at the bottom of the carriage, again imploring, — entreating, — adjuring them, as they were fathers and husbands, to have mercy on him, — to have pity upon him, and to go with him in pursuit of the coach. — Again he imprecated the vengeance of heaven on his head, if he attempted to escape from them. — He told them he meant to surrender himself — that he had no intention to conceal his person.

" Like enough, my lad," cried one of his keepers with a hoarse laugh, " we know ye a bit better, than to trust ye man. — What ! you were ready to surrender, I suppose, when we sent the pop-guns ater you at Mason's, the other night, hey ? —"

" Do you doubt me, scoundrel !" cried Pen, raving, and again forgetting his situation.

" Oh no, my hearty, we've no doubt, and don't mean to have none," said a second.

" Come, come, no palaver here. Why one would think," cried a third, winking at his com-

panions, "that he was now upon the lay. Ye need not be shy with us, young fellow, we've knowed your pranks long enow. Why I did'nt think ye'd be sich a sniveller ater all, to shame your gang."

"My gang! thou infernal—"

"Hold your tongue, sirrah," cried the tipstaff; "dont come, for to go, to be ungenteel; you've met with civil treatment so far, and as for you're dying game, that's for you to settle with your conscience, and them as herds with ye. Ye can't turn, however, my lad; the murder's clear agen you; so I dont see much good ye'll get by peaching ater all."

Pen, —we have long acknowledged — was no philosopher; but he felt how powerless he was, and how useless was either altercation, or reasoning with the people, who now had charge of him; despair sat upon his countenance, which was almost livid with agitation. In his agony he had bitten his lips through, and the blow he had received in the first instance, had suffused his eyes with coagulated blood. His clothes were in disorder from the struggles in which he had been engaged, and when he was lifted out of the carriage, and conveyed through an ex-

pectant crowd, (for every avenue had been secured for his apprehension,) it was not surprising, that many among them declared, his very countenance and appearance were sufficient to prove, " what the fellow was."

Our unfortunate hero was conducted to a strong room, strictly watched and guarded, — not, as he apprehended, in one of the Police Offices, but in that of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Every minute the door of the room opened, and some one made his appearance, obviously for the purpose of identifying the person of the prisoner. To each, in succession, did Pen address himself, entreating to be heard, — to be examined, and to be disposed of; — trusting to circumstances which might still enable him to pursue, by proxy at least, — the disturber of his peace, and the ravisher of Ellice Craig.

That Major Irwine was the man, he entertained not a doubt; for, although he at first mistook the object, and supposed Rose Weston to be the person thus outraged, still he recollected, — that the poor mother had hinted in her confused communication, that "there was another

object," which stood in the way of her child's peace.

A thousand circumstances had arisen to the vivid imagination of Pen, which tended to confirm his conviction. The threat he had heard the Major utter against him the day before — his system of watching his motions, and the knowledge of his being concealed in the lodgings of Mrs. Weston, — all contributed to fix him in the views, he had taken of the case.

He no longer hesitated as to the cause and manner of Ellice Craig's first elopement. She had been torn from her family by the Major, whose mysterious conduct now stood explained, and she had contrived an escape, — probably to fly to himself, — when she was again arrested by her vile ravisher. Why had the Major sought his acquaintance in town,— which he had avoided in the country ? —Why had he set a watch upon him, if not to secure himself from any interference in his atrocious schemes ?

A thousand, and a thousand plans had rapidly succeeded each other in his mind, and passed like electric sparks in succession, before he could fix upon any one plausible, even to his sanguine

imagination, or practicable to his purpose. At length, as if by inspiration, he felt he had an expedient at hand; and, turning to the only one of his captors, who remained in the room, with his new attendants, he requested to speak with him apart. He told him, — not as was usual with him, his whole story, — but those parts of it only as were connected with Ellice Craig; — and, entering into such details as might enable his new ally, with the skill and address of his official pursuits, to ascertain the movements and identify the person of Major Irwine, — he promised him a most extraordinary reward, if he could gain the necessary intelligence, — or arrest the fugitives on their way.

"Why look ye, Master," answered the man, "ye hav'nt conducted yourself in the genteelest way, as I may say, to the gemmen as nabbed you — but I pass over that here, seeing as how, it's no ways pleasant to be stopped short, when one doesn't expect it — and we're some way used to that here sort of thing — therefore I drop the genteelness of your behavor altogether, as I may say. —"

"Will you undertake the job?" cried Pen, interrupting him.

"Patience, my master; we never does things in a hasty manner, on these here occasions; so much for that: — but pray now, let me ax ye, Master Brown, what d'ye see in my face?"

Pen looked full upon it — but did not choose to trust his ingenuousness, with a reply.

"D'ye see gull written on it? — Look ye, young fellow — all this flam wont go down with me. — D'ye think I'm a pigeon, to come to your hand and be made an evidence of the Lord knows what rigmarole, about Majors and Misses? — Why heaven love your precious eyes, I thought you'd knowed better.— They han't described you well, to my mind. Thee seem'st no better than a sapling — or thee tak'st me for one. I'll tell ye a bit o' my mind; — you had better be thinking how you may glib the gemmen up stairs.—You wont do me, I promise ye."

What the ingenuous mind of our poor friend, Pen, suffered at the injurious insinuations which he only half understood, — or how he was stung by the reflection, that he could no longer knock a man down at his own discretion, upon receiving what he considered an adequate provocation,—may be easily conjectured. He felt somewhat like a wretch, wedged in a narrow

pass, from which he finds all efforts to extricate himself vain; whilst the horrors of suffocation are fast gaining upon him. — Madness, or something akin to it, would assuredly have ensued, had he not, at this critical moment, been summoned to attend the board, which was now assembled for his examination, above stairs.

He was conducted into a large and elegant room, in which several persons, evidently of the superior order of men, were seated at a long table. One, who seemed to preside, was placed at the head of it, and towards the bottom, sat a clerk or secretary, with writing materials before him; a barrister, also, took his place at the lower end of the board. Near the upper end, was a vacant chair, and as Pen was led to the foot of the table, the president observed to the gentlemen around him, that they could no longer wait for his lordship, but must proceed to business. A general assent was nodded, and all eyes were directed towards our hero.

His appearance seemed to create some general observation among the members of this court, who whispered each other, whilst their eyes were fixed upon him. The president, however, striking on the board, desired that the examination might be entered upon.

Pen, who was not a nice observer of time or place, thought this a favourable opportunity of urging the hardship of his situation.

"Gentlemen," he began, — in a tone very unlike that of a criminal, — "I am aware many forms are necessary on occasions like the present; but, as far as I am concerned, I am content to waive them. I acknowledge myself guilty, and —"

"Hold, sir," cried the lawyer, I am here, to perform my duty equally towards you, and to the honourable council; allow me to warn you against any unnecessary admission which may tend to criminate yourself. What you are about to say, must form part of the evidence. —

"I am obliged to you, sir," replied Pen, interrupting; "but so far from wishing to avoid self-crimination, it has all along been my intention to surrender myself, and to take my trial for the crime of which I have been guilty."

"Indeed, Mr. Brown, you are wrong, observed the president, not to be governed by what Mr. Attorney has suggested to you. Prudence —"

"Sir," returned our hero, "prudence is out

of the question; I act under no impulse of fear, —conscience and honour are my guides, and —"

Here, he was again checked by a member of the court, who told him, at least, to wait until such questions had been put to him, as were necessary to substantiate his guilt.

"What need of all this?" he retorted; "I am guilty — I admit, of murder, if it must needs be called so, — and so it ought, indeed, to be esteemed, in the eyes of God and men. — I am not, however, on my trial, I presume, and what I may have to say in my defence, may as well be reserved to that solemn occasion, when, if I be condemned by the laws of my country, — as I stand convicted in my conscience, and at the tribunal of heaven, — I shall submit to my fate without a murmur."

The court seemed thunderstruck, — they gazed on each other, and then looked upon Pen, whom they suffered to proceed, literally because they were too much surprised, to interrupt him.

"All this, therefore, may be quickly disposed of; but, gentlemen, there is an interest, much nearer to my heart — an interest that brings me on my knees before you; — my life, I would disdain to ask, if it be duly forfeit, — but to rescue

innocence from ruin, to snatch the companion of my childhood, the twin-being of my soul from horrors too mighty to be contemplated without madness, I would —"

"Whither, sir, are you hurrying?" cried the lawyer, again interposing.

"To my purpose," cried Pen, indignantly. "I appeal to you, gentlemen, as men of education, and humanity, to suffer me, with whatever guard or attendants may be thought necessary to secure me against evasion, — if my honour, which has never yet been doubted, be insufficient, — to pursue the ravisher of innocence, — to hunt down to the world's verge the wretch who has dared to outrage the principles of humanity, and to force from her friends, and from these arms, — the purest of created beings, the most angelic of women!" Here he burst into a passion of tears.

"Here must surely be some mistake," observed a member of the board, who appeared to be affected by the agitation of our hero!

"He is evidently deranged," observed another aside.

"Or affects it," — returned the lawyer.

The president, however, answered Pen's ap-

peal, by observing, "that it was wholly out of the power or province of the council, to comply with any request of the nature now proposed. The order of proceeding must be regularly complied with, and the prisoner must submit to the interrogatories, about to be put to him."

"And suffer Ellice Craig," exclaimed Pen, almost foaming with agitation, "to be torn from the country, perhaps, — and outraged by every species of cruelty and insult."

"We can hear no more of this!" cried the president, with more asperity than had before appeared; "the prisoner must be brought up for examination another time, if his present state of mind disqualifies him from answering the questions necessary to be put."

"Put them then," cried Pen, in a tone of querulous, but submitting despair; "I have a letter ready, written to the Lord Chief Justice in my pocket, — which would render all further examination unnecessary."

"Produce that letter," said the president.

Pen put his hand in his pockets, but found that they were empty; — and, starting, exclaimed, that he had been robbed. — One of his captors who remained at his back, here pro-

duced a small bundle, in which he stated were the contents of what had been taken from the prisoner's pocket, an operation which had been performed, whilst our hero lay senseless from the blow received on his first capture. This was laid upon the table, and, being untied,—two pistols fell out, together with loose papers, and other miscellaneous matter,—among which, appeared to be a sealed letter, addressed, To the Lord Chief Justice of England.

"Are the pistols loaded?" asked a member.

"They *were*," answered Pen, with perfect coolness.

"Indeed!" exclaimed more voices than one.

"They are upon half cock," said Pen, observing the alarm they had created.—They were removed to another part of the room.—The president took the sealed letter, and laid it on a port-folio before him. A pause enabled the president to begin the examination.

"Your name, sir,—is John Brown!" taking up a pen, and the secretary dipping his, into the inkstand.

"My name is Pendarves Owen," answered Pen, with dignity; "there is no further necessity, to affect mystery."

"Bless me!" exclaimed one of the Board; "I recollect him; it was he who," and he whispered the circumstance of his adventure in the House of Commons. — All eyes were again fixed upon poor Pen, who, absorbed in his own reflections, heeded not the increased attention he had drawn upon himself.

"A Bellingham!" said one; — a nod affirmative from another.

"We suspected," observed the president, "that John Brown, was not your real name; may we ask upon what occasion you assumed it?"

"Upon the only occasion, that could have tempted me, against my better judgment, to an artifice so contemptible, — to save my person from a prison, at a moment when it was essential to my first object, in life, to be at liberty."

"Candid at least," said one of the board.

"And pray, sir, when was that?"

"Immediately after — my misfortune."

"What do you particularly call — your misfortune?"

"That which I imbrued my hands in —

the blood of a fellow-creature," answered Pen, overcome with the recollection.

"Honest!" observed one.

"And not hardened!" returned his neighbour.

"What could have induced you to commit an act, the enormity of which, you seem now so duly to appreciate?" asked the president.

"Infatuation, and the false notions of independence, which, man in his pride, considers essential to his honour."

"Mistaken notions, indeed! it is a pity they had not presented themselves to your mind in sufficient force, before you were hurried into the commission of such a crime."

"Goad me not with reproaches," cried Pen, angrily; "the sting is strong enough here," pointing emphatically to his heart.

"This is strange!" observed the president to one near him; "and yet,—pray Mr. Owen, had you no accomplice, or accomplices in this affair?"

"One only, and he was fatally drawn in by me; he is, however, I trust, safe, and will not suffer for my crime."

"Have you any objection to reveal his name?"

"None; it was Frank Wettenhall!"

"Mr. Secretary, have you set that down?" asked the lawyer.

"Do you know where this person is now to be found?"

"I do not; it was his determination to leave the kingdom, when we last parted."

"Where is his usual residence?"

"In Wigmore-street;" here the address was taken down, and some orders were given, to which Pen paid no attention. — He had not hesitated to give the information respecting Wettenhall, first, from his natural abhorrence of any thing mysterious, or disingenuous; — secondly, because if he had left the country, it was a matter of no consequence, and if he was still in town, the near approach of the sessions would prevent any great inconvenience to him. He had no apprehension as to any ultimate consequences of the trial, to him at all events. — After some consultation, the examination was again resumed.

"Where did you sleep, Mr. Owen," asked the president, "on the night of the murder?"

" The term is a strong one,—though a just one, sir.—I was not aware at the time, that the blow had been fatal, although I feared it.—I therefore went to a lodging, prepared by my friend for me, in ——. Upon my soul, sir, I forget the name of it — an obscure court, in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell.

" Good.—Do you know the name of your landlady?"

" It is Grub."

" Did you ever employ this woman for the purpose of carrying on your schemes?"

" Employ that woman! — Surely not."

" Recollect yourself, Mr. Owen;—did you never use her, as the agent of a secret correspondence?"

" I never exchanged ten words with her."

" Produce the witness."

Here, Mrs. Grub made her appearance, with a succession of courtesies, before the board. Being confronted with the prisoner, who was not a little astonished at the magic power by which a woman, he had so recently parted with at the foot of her own stair-case, was thus wafted into his presence in another hemisphere.—After some preliminary questions touching her

identity, she was asked, whether "she knew the prisoner?" She answered in the affirmative.

"How long have you known him?"

"Ever since, your honours, he come to my ouse!"

"And when was that?"

"On Monday evening last, your worships."

"What did he call himself?"

"Mr. John Brown, an please your highnesses."

"And was that his real name?"

"Can't have no reason to say, your mightinesses."

"Indeed, sir," cried Pen, interrupting the court, this is a mere waste of time; I acknowledge every thing."

"We must not be interrupted, Mr. Owen. Had you reason (the president turning to the woman) to believe, that he came to your house for the purpose of concealment?"

"Yes! I had, your majesties; for is friend, who is no better, I believe, than he should be, went out and bought en an ould bell veather great-coat, and a at as vasn't vorth picking hout of the kennel."

"Did you observe any thing particular in his conduct?"

"Very peeticlar, your greatnesses;—for he knocked about my farniter as if hit ad been so much lumber; and he broked my chimley bow-pot to hatoms."

"Psha!—Did he employ you to do any thing for him?"

"Yes, your highnesses!—he mad me cuk is dinner, and then never touched a morsel, th'of I made it as savory as—

"Never mind your cooking, good woman;—did he never employ you to do any thing else?"

"Yes, your majesties; he gave me, and a lad as I ployed, money, to carry things to the newspapers."

"That's to the point;—of what nature were these things?"

"They was all glum gliffies, your highnesses."

"How do you know what they were?"

"Cause, your worships, the vafers was vet; so I peeped in for suspicion's sake."

"Audacious woman!" exclaimed Pen.

"Pray, do not, Mr. Owen, interrupt the witness; you may cross-examine her hereafter, if you please."

"Aye, your honourables, he can be cross enow ven he pleases; — but I oould'nt submit to 'em, and vont now."

"Silence, woman!" exclaimed the president, in a voice that awed her into acquiescence. — "Since you did look into these papers, may we ask, of what they consisted? — What do you mean by glum gliffies?"

"Why, la! as I told your excellencies; there was — lork, — I av one on 'em by me," said she, fumbling for it in her pocket.

"One of my letters!" exclaimed Pen; "why thou most —"

"Silence, prisoner! — and how came you to retain this?"

"For curiosity, your highnesses."

"And (upon examining it) to pocket the price of the advertisement."

The woman hung down her head. — The paper was read; and we, who are a little aware of the nature of Pen's style, of striking off a subject at a heat, need not be surprised, under all the circumstances of the case, that serious matter was suspected to be hid, under the mysterious notification, and awful initials of the advertisement.

The president, turning over a newspaper that lay before him, observed, "that there was an answer to the advertisement, which it might be proper to read to the board."

"Give it to me!" cried Pen; — "do give it to me; for Heaven's sake let me see it, sir! — My all! — my life, may be at stake!"

"Very probably," observed the lawyer, coolly, and noting down the expression of the prisoner's countenance; — "it may be read to you."

"Oh, sir!" returned Pen, in the utmost agitation, let it not be profaned by being publicly read; it is from a female, — a —

"You must not interrupt business, Mr. Owen," observed the president; — if Mr. Attorney thinks, it may be read —"

"Surely, my lord," answered the barrister, "it may be read — with the strictest propriety."

"The strictest propriety!" exclaimed Pen; — "what must be your notions of propriety, in submitting the delicate and reserved communication of a woman, to the observations of a court?"

"This is no court, sir!" observed a member; and your present agitation must be ac-

counted for, on some other grounds than mere tenderness on the score of female delicacy, since, you will recollect, the paper is, by this time, — in the hands of half the town."

"Let me hear it then, if I must not see it; read it! — read it! — but keep me no longer in suspense.

"Mr. Secretary, you may read it," said the barrister.

It ran in these words.

"E. C. cannot meet P. O. — All communication is cut off. — P. O. has defeated his own purpose. — The worst has happened, and he must hasten to G. G. C. H. P. — or be for ever —"

"This, sir," said the lawyer, addressing Pen, "does not appear to be of a nature, to give offence to the delicacy of a lady."

"I don't understand it," exclaimed Pen.

"That is, you will not explain it?"

"I cannot, on my soul!" — which was very true, for he had not sufficiently recollected the directions, given in the anonymous communication he had received, to perceive the correspondence of the initials, with the address to his Portsmouth patron.

"We may proceed, I believe," observed the president — to which a bow of assent being returned by the barrister, the examination went on.

Mrs. Grub proved his having slept from his lodgings on the Monday night; and gave a detailed account of the arrival of an old woman in the morning to fetch his clothes. — He was then asked, where he had slept on that night?"

"At Mrs. Weston's!"

"And where does Mrs. Weston live?"

"Near Smithfield."

"What is the name of the street?"

"It is a court — or alley."

"Its name."

"I know not — I never heard it."

"Who is Mrs. Weston?"

"I know but little of her; but that little I must be excused from stating."

"You refuse to answer that question?"

"Most positively."

"Well then, sir, will you acquaint us with the reason, — the motive you had, for sleeping at Mrs. Weston's, instead of your own lodgings? — Are we to presume, the lady is — no better than she should be?" asked the lawyer.

"She! — she is the purest and most benevolent of beings."

"Humph! — You knew her before the evening, on which you slept there!"

"I did."

"Where did you know her?"

"In Newgate!"

"An unfortunate coincidence, Mr. Owen;" — whose cause, indeed, appeared to grow worse and worse as it proceeded.

"May we ask," demanded the president, "how you employed yourself during the evening, — after you left Mrs. Grub's lodgings?"

"I was robbed, and nearly murdered, as I passed through Smithfield."

"So! — you appear to have recovered rapidly; for we have reason to believe, you were occupied in some active measures, in the course of that very evening."

"I have nothing to conceal. I was carried, through the benevolent kindness of a Lincolnshire grazier, to a public-house; in return for which act of mercy, he was himself plundered of his property!"

"Do you speak from compunction, Mr. Owen," asked the lawyer.

"I don't understand your question."

"Do you know, how he lost his property?"

"To be sure I do!—a swindling scoundrel, who entered into conversation with us, contrived to pick his pocket."

"And then you retired to Mrs. Weston's—to bed!"

"No such thing!—I knew not where she lived; for her address was in the pocket-book of which I was rifled."

"Then you found her out by instinct," said the lawyer; who, it will be perceived, began to lose much of that delicacy, which, from the apprehension of some mistake in identifying the prisoner,—had before marked his interrogatories.

"If not by intuition, by something very like it;—it certainly was by no exercise of my own discretion, or by election."—

"This is singular; pray may we ask how you were thus spirited into her spells, as it were?"

"I sought shelter at her window, to save my life."

"You said just now, I believe, that your life was saved by a Lincolnshire grazier. This is not Mrs. Weston, we are to presume."

Pen, who quickly perceived the change of

tone which had taken place in the mode of examination, was not in a humour to bear raillery; and immediately answered, "Pursue your duty, sir, but beware of implying any thing, against the honour of an Owen. I never was guilty of falsehood or prevarication in my life, — nor shall any man, with impunity, — screened as he may suppose himself to be, under the trappings of office, or dressed in a little brief authority, — dare to tamper with a character, which, with all my frailties, — follies, — and excesses, I have, — and — ever will, preserve — spotless."

The lawyer was really surprised, and almost abashed; but gently observing, that it was not usual to depend upon evidence to character, from a prisoner under his circumstances, he avoided any further reflections, which did not immediately arise out of the regular course of the proceedings.

"As you are offended, Mr. Owen, at our suspicions," observed the president, "perhaps you will not object to do them away, by a statement of facts."

"I can have no objection;" and he then proceeded to state what had occurred at the Blue Posts; the new acquaintance he made there:

and his motives for attending the secret committee, of reformers.

"You approved the sentiments you heard there, it is to be presumed?" was the next question.

"Approved! I abhorred them."

"It appears,—though not in immediate evidence, and you are not called upon to commit yourself,—that you have long professed opinions hostile to the present form and constitution of the Commons House of Parliament."

"Far from it; I was that very night the advocate for it."

"You spoke then—in this reform committee?"

"I would have spoken, had I dared."

"As you did not, how did you appear to be the advocate for the existing system."

"It was before I visited the committee."

"Who then was your opponent, in this discussion?"

"I know not his name."

"How is that?"

"I did not ask it."

"Then you were led like a lamb to the slaughter-house," cried the lawyer, who now thought he perceived, rank equivocation.

" It was, indeed, near being made a slaughter-house; but I did not anticipate the scene, when I entered."

" Probably not. Then with your unknown friend—"

" He was no friend of mine."

" Then with this accidental acquaintance, you became the silent auditor of digested treason, and projected assassination?"

" What could I do?" exclaimed Pen; " I might have fallen a sacrifice as well as the poor devil who conducted me. I was resolved to do all that could be done."

" And what was that?"

" To have revealed the whole to government."

" Indeed! Then how happened it, that you, at the risk of your life, fled from the officers of justice, when, by your surrender, you might have been secure?"

" Secure! the name I had assumed was, by some fatality, known to these people, and the moment of my detection, was nearly the crisis of my fate. Several balls passed over my head, and fell near me, even as I lay stunned by my fall, on the roof of a house."

" Oh,—you fell upon the roof of a house?"

" I did."

" And fled to it again for succour?"

" I did not."

" How!—Produce those articles." The great coat, bloody handkerchief, cravat and hat, which the woman at Mrs. Weston's had placed about the garret window, were now brought forward. Pen stared, and his surprise was taken as an evidence of guilt.

" Do you know these articles, Mr. Owen?"

" I do; they were mine; they formed my disguise."

" Candidly avowed, however."

" Candidly! do you suppose, sir, I would *stoop to deception?*"

" Humph!" was repeated in more instances than one.

" Where did you leave those articles?"

Pen at the moment recollected all the circumstances of the case, and, in spite of his own tortured feelings, and his irksome situation, he could not restrain a smile, observing " that he recollected the circumstance perfectly; that a good-natured old woman had carried up those articles to mislead the officers; whilst he was quietly in bed, personating the sick daughter, of his kind hostess."

" Mrs. Weston?" asked the lawyer.

"For heaven's sake," resumed Pen, every trace of laughter, being quickly banished; "for heaven's sake, let not that good woman suffer, for her charitable and humane contrivance.

"Oh, by no means, Mr. Owen;—you should, however, have weighed that consideration, before you had so exposed her, by your unseasonable mirth."

"Heaven have mercy on me!" cried Pen, devoutly turning his eyes upwards. "Never was mirth more strange to me, than at this moment."

"You are then disposed to turn evidence," demanded the lawyer, "and to expose the proceedings of this radical meeting?"

"I don't exactly understand your phrase; — I am not only disposed — but, when I can clear my mind from the terrible anxiety, which tears it piecemeal at this moment, I am most desirous that government should be put in possession of information, so important."

"You are aware, Mr. Owen, that as you will stand committed for the crime of murder, which we do not meddle with at present, — your evidence cannot be received — to your own benefit."

"My own benefit! — On my soul, sir, you

seem to be as little acquainted with the workings of an honourable mind, as with those which influence mine, at the present moment. Benefit! Do you imagine the services of Pen Owen are to be purchased? No, no, — you are all in an error. If you, gentlemen, have no cognizance of the murder, as you are pleased — indeed as you are justified in calling it — you can have no further business with me. — I never denied my crime, and am ready to stand my trial before God, and my country; and would to heaven I stood as fair a chance of acquittal from the one, as from the other! I may recover tranquillity — but never the peace of mind, I have enjoyed: — the image will haunt me — HOLD — GRACIOUS GOD! what is THAT? — Who are you? — Speak!" screamed Pen, — starting back several paces from the board.

The assembly conceived that he had been seized with a sudden paroxysm of madness, a tendency to which, they had long suspected. They rose hastily from their chairs, and called upon the officers in waiting, to secure the prisoner.

Pen, however, threw them off with the strength of a giant, and gazing upon a person

who had just seated himself in the chair hitherto left vacant, on the side of the president, again called out in a tremulous, but loud voice, "Speak —in mercy speak—is it a living being—or—"

The adjured spirit rose from his seat, and, with scarcely less agitation, strained forward its eyes, with a look of inquiry. "Good heavens, Mr. Pen Owen!" *it* exclaimed; "what brings you into this situation?"

"Does it speak?"—exclaimed Pen. "Let me hear that sound again, in mercy—Lord Killcullane!"

"My good sir," cried his Lordship, coming round the table, and approaching Pen, "what is the meaning of this strange scene?"

"The meaning! *You* only, my Lord, can explain it," rushing towards him, whilst the officers attempted to hold him back. "I thought myself your murderer;—was told you had fallen a sacrifice to my rashness and temerity;—that I had the blood of a fellow-creature, and the curses of a childless father, to pursue me to the grave!"—Pen could say no more.—He sunk into the arms of those, who were set to guard him.

He was placed in a chair. The scenes in which

he had been involved,—the agitations he had undergone, — the bodily sufferings he had endured, had reduced him to so weak a state, that the reflux of feeling from a quarter so unexpected, had literally deprived him of sense.

Whilst he lay in this condition, a confusion and tumult upon the stair-case attracted the attention of the greater part of the company; whilst others were seeking from Lord Killcullane, an explanation of the extraordinary scene, in which he appeared to bear so distinguished a part. This was shortly given; and intelligence was conveyed to the council, that the *real* JOHN BROWN, who had been concerned in a radical riot, and had shot a constable, — was in safe custody.

Our hero was gently supported into an adjoining room, 'where the kindest attention was paid to his situation; and the evident torture of his mind awakened a sympathy, which even the former suspicion of his guilt, had not entirely been able to subdue.

It appeared, that the shot received by Lord Killcullane, had occasioned merely a flesh wound; but that, having grazed upon some artery, it caused an alarming flow of blood,

which, being stopped, allowed the surgeon leisure to examine, and to ascertain, that a few days would remedy the slight evil, that had been incurred.

His Lordship, who had been much struck with the spirit, and subsequent humanity of Pen Owen, was desirous that he should be immediately informed of the state of affairs; and the good-humoured duellist, O'Donnell, had gone in person to his lodgings, in Bury-street, on the afternoon of the meeting, in order to convey this agreeable intelligence.

How it happened that this account never reached the ears, of our hero, remains to be accounted for; but that Wettenhall should have been induced to believe, that his lordship was actually dead — was more than Pen could understand.

Having, in some measure, recovered from the attack, which so sudden a change in his circumstances had naturally occasioned, Pen was informed of all these particulars, by his lordship, who stood self-condemned, for having suffered himself to be detained from the duties of his office, (being connected with the home department,) when he might otherwise have saved

his former opponent, from the severe trial, to which his feelings and delicacy had been subjected.

Pen most warmly expressed all he felt upon the occasion; but briefly stating the situation in which he had left the woman of his heart, Lord Killcullane sent for the officer, to whose custody our hero had been entrusted *en chef*, and, desiring him to give Mr. Owen every aid in his power, the active agent of justice professed himself as willing now to afford assistance, as he had shown himself determined to withhold it before, adding, " I believe I can help your honour to a shorter way nor you expected; for the coach — seeing I always takes the number in the way of business, when any thing's stirring— is just comed upon the stand opposite, which carried off the fare, as the gemman was so eager ater."

" Heavens!" exclaimed Pen, " can you secure him? — Run."

" Nay, master, for the matter o' that, I ha' him under my thumb; I left him below in charge of my comrade, for, says I, as the gemman above stairs is likely to turn out another guess sort of person, from what we took him

for, we may as well see ater those, as he wished to lay hold on."

Pen shook Lord Killcullane warmly by the hand, and promised to wait upon him, when his mind was more at ease, to express the obligations he owed to him — then seizing the officer by the arm, he hurried him down stairs into the waiting room, — which he had left with such opposite feelings — to examine the hackney coachman, who, his guide informed him, was there waiting his further orders. — Pen immediately accosted the man, and telling him that all prevarication was useless, — which assurance was repeated upon the much higher authority of Pen's companion, — honest Jarvey did not hesitate, to give the fullest information, in his power.

"He had been taken from a stand," he said, "in Holborn, by a person who appeared to be a gentleman's servant out of livery, — who, putting a couple of one-pound notes into his hand, asked him if he had a mind for a good job, and a little risk, to which he assented, in consideration of the same sum being promised, if the said job was executed, with dexterity and success. He was then taken to a street in the neighbourhood

of Smithfield, and ordered to wait till a gentleman and lady should arrive,—that the moment they were in his coach, he was to drive off as fast as possible, through the turnpike leading to Islington, without paying attention to any other orders, or waiting for any further direction." He went on to say, that, after waiting about a quarter of an hour, he saw a very beautiful young lady, accompanied by a gentleman, wrapt up in a large military cloak.—

"The Major identified," exclaimed Pen.—"Did the lady appear to accompany him willingly?"

"She did, as far as I could judge," answered the man, "'till the steps of the coach vas let down, and the gemman, holding her fast by the hand, jumped in, and tried to pull her ater him; then she seemed woundy fritted, and declared she vouldn't enter—asked what vas meant—and was all obstropolous, 'till the man as first hired me comed behind her, and by main force pushed her in, and slammed to the door, which was my signal to be off.—Then comes you, sir, or some one deucedly like you, and strikes at the young fellow, and brings him to the ground.—Then I seed your honour nabbed in turn, by a *set*

of, — I mean some of these gemman here, who had been upon the look out some time, and who, as I began to expect, were waiting for my fare; so I was glad to be off; and by the time I had reached the turnpike, the gemman's gemman, as I call him, had got up vith us, and jumped upon the box."

"Well, well," interrupted Pen impatiently; "but where — where did you set down your fare?"

"That I can hardly tell, your honour."

"No prevarication, sirrah."

"La, no, your honour, it's no varication, but I can drive to the spot in the dark, if that be all."

"Off then," cried Pen, darting towards the door, — where his property having been delivered up to him, by order of the council, he seized his pistols, and accompanied by his friend, the Bow-street runner, jumped into the hackney-coach, and bade the man drive on with his utmost speed.

When the party had arrived on the out-skirts of the town, the coachman whipped his horses up the hill, towards Islington; but when he had reached the top — he stopped. Pen thrust his head out of the window, to demand the reason.

"Why, marster," replied the man, scratching his head, "I com'd to it the other woy, and it's puzzled me, some how."

"Curse your stupidity, cannot you—"

"Oh, I sees now, your honour, yon's the split crow at the corner;" and immediately he set his miserable hacks into what was intended for their full speed, and, turning abruptly to the left, he passed along a row of new, but unoccupied houses. At the further end stood one, insulated from the rest, which had the appearance of being inhabited. The man drove up to the door, and Pen and his companion were on the steps of the house, before the triple-coated charioteer had descended from his elevation, to aid them.

They knocked, but no one answered — they rung — they hallooed — they listened — they heard enough, though but little, to convince them that living beings were within. — Pen placed his ear at the key-hole — he distinguished more — there was a bustle, — a struggle, — a faint scream. This was sufficient. — He assailed the outworks, whilst his active companion ran down the area steps. The fortress seemed to bid defiance to a *coup de main*. A regular siege was not among our hero's

calculations, for the conduct of the campaign.—Seeking for some instrument with which to break open the door — his new ally *doubted*, — whether they could make forcible entry, — without a warrant.

"A warrant ! !" absolutely roared our hero, "when Ellice Craig is on one side, and I on the other !" So saying, and taking the whole responsibility upon himself, he summoned to his aid, the three pair of broad shoulders, united under his immediate command, and giving the word, applied their compacted force like a battering ram, against the door,—which, on the first shock, was freed from all the ingenious mechanism, of locks, bars and bolts, with which it had been secured within.

No sooner had our hero made good his lodgment within the works, than running into the several apartments at hand, he called upon his lieutenant to take a central station in the hall, in order to prevent either ingress, or egress; but more accustomed to this sort of business than his general, the second in command, advised him to be cautious, as they did not yet know the number of the enemy; and added that it would be wise to ascend together, as the very silence which prevailed above, augured an ambuscade.

Pen was in too much haste, and too violently agitated, to be very pertinaceous in the article of military obedience. The coachman was desired to guard the entrance, whilst Pen and the officer, finding nothing in the lower regions, ascended to the first floor. Here all was equally deserted, though every corner, and every closet, capable of concealing an enemy, was visited, and ransacked.

"Hark," cried the officer, "there's something stirring above," and the creaking of a man's shoes, was distinctly heard over head. — Up rushed Pen — the front attic was open, but the door of the back room was closed. A smothered scream was heard; but scarcely heard, before the door itself was shivered into a thousand pieces, and a man, who was forcing a handkerchief into the mouth of the almost fainting Ellice Craig, was, by the same effort, stretched on the floor.

"Ellice — my long-lost Ellice! have I found thee, — and found thee thus?" falling exhausted at her feet, and embracing her knees. She fell back in a swoon, — but not before she had uttered a scream — certainly not of terror, — on beholding Pen Owen.

He motioned to the officer to retire, but

desired him to wait on the outside of the door, to prevent any sudden attack.

The old soldier, however, first secured the ruffian, our hero had struck down, who proved to be the man, who had already, in the morning, felt the weight of his vengeance. He was given into the safe custody of the coachman, who was summoned to bind his arms with a bell-rope, supplied from the adjoining room.

All Pen's efforts were now directed towards the recovery of his Ellice, upon whose beloved countenance, — so constantly present to his imagination, — so long withholden from his eyes, — his whole soul seemed rivetted.

On a table were water and hartshorn, to which it had evidently been necessary to have recourse before, — and to these he immediately resorted.

Ellice slowly recovered — and her first symptom of reviving sensation, was an exclamation of joy and surprise, at seeing her early friend and lover so near her. As she revived, on a more clear perception of her situation, however, she appeared to reproach herself, for giving way to this first impulse, — and gently pushing him from her, sobbed out, "Is it possible *you* can be concerned in this vile stratagem, Pen Owen?"

"Me!" exclaimed the tortured lover, "you see in me, my adored Ellice — your deliverer — your Pen — your own Pen; — ready to lay down his life — aye, ten thousand lives for ——"

"For Rose Weston!" cried she, interrupting him, with a look of mixed horror and contempt. — "Go, — go, — it is profanation." — At this moment, a violent noise broke in upon her reproaches.

Pen heard it not. — He stood stupified, waiting for the conclusion of her speech. — He could scarcely believe he was awake, — or that he was not a slave to some infernal illusion.

The wheels of a carriage, and a confused shout, had first arrested the alarmed attention of Ellice. — A contest was evidently carrying on below, — voices and struggling bodies, were heard, ascending the stairs together. — Ellice screamed; — she ran into the arms of Pen; — she pushed him away from her, at the same moment. — He seemed neither to regard *her*, nor the approaching uproar.

She cried aloud, — "Oh Pen Owen, Pen Owen! — if you are not indeed lost to all shame — save me, save me, at least from the hands of a villain; — protect your poor Ellice from being a victim — ."

Pen caught her half dead, in one arm, whilst with the other he seized, and cocked one of his pistols. — The door shook upon its hinges. — Voices, persons, still contended for mastery.

"Enter," exclaimed Pen. —

"Ah, no!" screamed Ellice, "let me not see the wretch again!"

"Enter!" repeated Pen, struggling to keep her back, and out of the line of his threatened vengeance; "enter — and your first step over the threshold, is death."

The door gave way — Major Irwine, exclaiming, "Villain," rushed forward. — Pen fired; — the Major staggered over the proscribed threshold, into the room. —

"God of Heaven!" screeched the maddened Ellice, — "my father!!" — and fell lifeless across the body of the Major!

CHAPTER VII.

The reader may perhaps conceive that he has had quite enough of our hero, and that a being so wholly given up to the tyranny of his passions, is neither an agreeable object of contemplation, nor one likely to afford a very wholesome lesson to "the young folks." I beg leave, however, to observe, that I am one of those, who never desert a friend, in the hour of need. At the same time, as the Spartans were wont to expose their drunken helots, so do I hold up even this, my best friend, when he is out of his sober senses, not as an example,—but as a warning to the aforesaid "young folks." Nevertheless, if they suppose he is revelling and triumphing in the successful vengeance inflicted upon his long-sought enemy, they have learned little of our hero's character, in the progress of his history.

If they infer that such a wild and desperate act, especially after his late "hair-breadth scapes," calls for some exemplary punishment, I answer, that, like another renowned hero, Pen sober, was a frequent appellant from Pen drunk—that he was a Christian—and, although he sometimes might forget it, that he had that within him, which he had never laboured to silence, and could inflict a pang, "like iron piercing to the soul," which the grand inquisitor himself might torture his own ingenuity in vain to outdo, in the mortification of the body.

To this, then, I may fairly leave him, as amply sufficient for poetical justice. The law must do the rest; and should he eventually be found guilty by a jury of his peers (if twelve such men can be collected within the bills of mortality), I shall of course consider it to be my duty to attend in person, and to furnish my readers, not only with his trial in detail, but with the whole of his character and behaviour, (his life they will already have had) "dying speech and confession, as is usual upon such occasions."

His public exit, if so interesting an incident be granted us, — may be wrought up with effect for our closing scene. "*Finis coronat opus.*" — By the bye, my bookseller suggests that *finis* should be spelt *funis*; but I do not believe there is any authority for this orthographical innovation, and, between *you* and *I*, the change would be for the worse. It is only the difference between our own end, and a rope's end; — although the fate of our hero may *depend* upon it. Further than a graphic description of his execution, I do not pledge myself. His body, it is true, if his sentence be carried into full effect, will not be left to his friends, for "decent interment," but be delivered over to the surgeons for dissection. This will be the business of the reviewers, and they, no doubt, will perform the task — *con amore.*

These interesting points being adjusted — we may as well return to our long-neglected friends, at Oldysleigh, and unravel and explain (a most irksome and unpleasant part of duty, although I am fearful a very necessary one, for the benefit of my readers) all that may be necessary to render the late melancholy catastrophe in-

telligible to those, whose powers of perception have not already penetrated it.

We left them, the reader will recollect, calmly, but anxiously awaiting events, to unfold to them the fate of their beloved Ellice, which, owing to a chain of circumstantial evidence, or rather of strange coincidences, they no longer doubted was linked in some way or other, with that of Pen Owen.

Of the whole party, Sir Luke Oldysworth was the soonest reconciled to the existing state of things. He was every day more pleased with the conduct and character of his adopted heir, whose popularity among the tenantry, bore as strong a testimony to his humanity and goodness of heart, as his indefatigable exertions to bring back peace to the bosom of an unhappy family, and to screen Pen Owen, — whose demeanour towards himself, it was universally admitted, had been wantonly offensive, — from as much of the obliquy, that had fallen upon him, as possible.

Poor Uncle Caleb was restless, and unhappy, not more from the disappointment he experienced in the failure of his hopes, respecting his nephew Pen, than from having the regu-

larity of his habits, and the source of daily comfort, his society had so long afforded him, thus broken up. He frequently expressed his determination of going up to London, for the purpose of bringing the boy, to a sense of his duty, — fully convinced, as he maintained, — that, "if he saw his old uncle's face, he would turn his back upon all the wicked people, who had decoyed him away." He no longer entertained a doubt that his nephew had married Ellice Craig; and, in his simplicity, gave no little offence to the feelings of Mrs. Mapletoft, by the reflection that "poor Pen might have done better," though, he must say, she was a good girl — before he married her."

The letter, however, which our hero despatched from Newgate, gave the poor old man a shock his store of philosophy was not competent to bear, and he submitted with a sort of awful resignation, to the fate which he now considered inevitable. "He was resolved to see the poor boy before he died, (for he felt it decreed, he should be hanged), or to throw himself at the feet of the king, to have mercy on his grey hairs, and save the heir of all the Owens — from an ignominious death."

It was long before the good sense, and mild reasoning of Mapletoft could re-assure him upon a subject, which had nearly reduced him to despair.

The vicar had undertaken to answer the letter, and we may recollect the effect produced upon the unfortunate *detenu*, on receiving it. It was not surprising that the Mapletofts, — who, partaking of the common error, supposed Ellice Craig to be the partner of his punishment, if not of his excesses, should have felt strongly and indignantly upon such an occasion. A short time, indeed, revealed the real state of the case, as far as the cause of Pen's imprisonment was concerned, but his determined and persevering silence, — although imposed by their own orders, in some degree — convinced them they had little to hope from his repentance, or from a return to a sense of duty.

It may, however, be a matter of some surprise to the reader, that this gentleman, who had been the early friend and instructor of the boy, and had admitted him to his heart, from the acknowledged sweetness of his disposition, and the natural integrity of his mind, should have given him up at once, and supposed,

without more direct evidence, that he had in so short a commerce with the world, become the very reverse of that he promised to be, and a mere vagabond, without principle or compunction. Appearances, to be sure, were strong against him. Circumstantially he had been proved guilty of attempting the life of Sir Luke's heir, merely because he stood in the way of an imprudent and unauthorized passion, — and no less so of a rude trespass upon the laws of duty and hospitality, in regard to his early friend and instructor, by tearing away from her closest ties, the child of his adoption.

Still it may be said, that, with a parental and friendly indulgence towards acts, which, if they could not be justified, might still be palliated, it was natural that Mr. Mapletoft, who knew the structure of the mind he had early laboured to form, should make many allowances, and trust to nature for redeeming the errors into which inexperience might have led him. But it is to be remembered, that this gentleman had long deplored and deprecated the desultory plan of education which his inconsistent and unsteady parent had followed, after Pen had been withdrawn from his superintendance. He foresaw the consequence of the long intervals

between the abandonment of one capricious plan, and the adoption of a new one, when the mind was left to run riot, without any fixed rule, — and the imagination to wander over objects, good or bad, as they floated on the surface of society, where accident, or a combination of circumstances, had thrown him. He had perceived the passions untrained to discipline, and volatile as the vapour, which could in an instant inflame them, betraying themselves in every tone, gesture, and look of his former pupil. He laboured, during his short residence at Oldysleigh, — after his father had ceased his experiments upon education, — to restrain the hourly ebullitions into which his feelings were accustomed to hurry him, and foresaw, that some check more powerful than a mere knowledge, or even abhorrence, of what was wrong, was necessary to prevent the young man from being hurried into errors and crimes, likely, not only to colour his own destiny, — but involve the happiness of all who were connected with him.

We have seen him frequently interposing such a check, when the impetuosity of our hero's feelings were about to lead him astray; and although he found the task pregnant with

difficulty, and almost hopeless, his affection for the youth himself, and his veneration for the amiable and inoffensive uncle, Caleb, determined him to persevere,—and to rescue, if possible, the over confident boy, from the tyranny of his passions.

With these sentiments, (whether altogether founded or not, is no longer a question), it was very natural that the accounts, however exaggerated, of Pen's irregularities in scenes of metropolitan dissipation and depravity, which reached his ears,— added to the full conviction, be it recollected, of a dishonourable act towards himself and his family,— should have fixed his opinions respecting the unfortunate young man, and that despair of success should have prevented his taking more active measures, for the recovery of the stray sheep. He felt assured that nothing but the penalty of vice could have the effect of redeeming him, and that in the school of adversity alone, was there a chance, of reading his own follies to advantage.

Like many very wise men, I am induced to believe Mr. Mapletoft erred nearly as much, on the side of sober calculation, as our hero did from the want of it, on the other. There is an idiosyncrasy in the moral, as well as physical constitution, which baffles all regular prac-

tice. Pen's feelings, however strong, had a direct bias towards virtue; and an appeal to his gratitude, — to his affection, — would, in a moment, have acted as a sedative upon any tendency to excess, or error. Mr. Mapletoft did not prescribe this remedy; and all that can be said is, that philosophers, as well as physicians, are sometimes out in their prognostics and diagnostics, — and must occasionally have to console themselves for the loss of a patient, by the conscientious conviction of having treated his case — *secundum artem.*

Frank Wettenhall had more than once visited London, for the sole purpose of collecting information respecting the fugitives, without having it in his power to convey any thing very satisfactory, to the party at Oldysleigh. He had with difficulty traced Pen, as he informed them, after he had left his first lodgings; — and, subsequent to his imprisonment in Newgate, he had never been able to gain sight of him, until the morning on which he encountered him in the street, and became a party in the battle royal which ensued.

In relating such facts as came within his observation, he was rather drawn into the details by a particular mode of cross-examination, — a

specimen of which we have witnessed upon a former occasion, on the part of Mr. Mapletoft,— than as professed evidence, against our hero. He did not deny positive facts, but his great object appeared to be, to dwell rather on the *strength* of the temptation,—than the *weakness* which submitted to it. His friends could not fail to perceive this, and estimate his character accordingly, — with the exception of poor uncle Caleb.

With all the good man's philanthropy, with all his notions of justice, and with all his innocent credulity,—he could never be brought to believe, that, some how or other, the young heir did not stand in the light of his nephew; and though little disposed to make unnecessary reflections, he contrived, at least once in seven days, to break in upon the general eulogium bestowed on the heir of Sir Luke, with a groan, and an observation tacked to it, "that he was nothing to poor Pen, — if poor Pen hadn't fallen among the Philistines."

One day as Mr. and Mrs. Mapletoft were sitting in the Parsonage study, talking over the subject ever uppermost in their thoughts, and framing some probable issue of events which still appeared to be involved in so much mystery, — a carriage drove up to the door, and,

to their very great surprise, Major Irwine was announced. He appeared to be considerably agitated; but, quickly recovering himself, very politely apologized for having so long delayed to return the visit, with which Mr. Mapletoft had honoured him, on his first coming into the neighbourhood. —

"When my reasons are made known to you, Mr. and Mrs. Mapletoft, I trust I shall stand acquitted, at least of any slight, or —"

He hesitated for a word; and Mrs. Mapletoft availed herself of the pause, to observe, rather haughtily for her, "that it was far from the wish of Mr. Mapletoft or herself, to intrude their society, where it was not courted."

"Courted, madam!" answered the Major; "if there is a being on earth, whom I would court — worship — follow with my vows of gratitude to the world's end, — you are that being."

Mapletoft absolutely lay back in his chair with astonishment, whilst his wife rose from hers, — both simultaneously struck with the common report, of the black major being deranged in his intellects.

"Major Irwine," said Mr. Mapletoft, with great solemnity, "I fear you have mistaken — have —"

"No, sir," answered the Major, with increasing vivacity, which by no means tended to diminish the apprehension of his host and hostess; "no, sir, I am mistaken in nothing, if this Mrs. Mapletoft is the preserver, — the mother of Ellice Craig."

"Of whom! — of Ellice, did you say, Major Irwine?" cried Mrs. Mapletoft, "what — what — do you know any thing of her?"

"Be patient, my dear madam, and you shall hear all," returned the Major, who found it necessary to resume his own calmness, in order to meet the increasing agitation of the opposite party; "I request your attention to what I am about to say, and, if possible, — your forbearance."

"Forbearance!" exclaimed the agitated lady, "what is coming —"

"Nay, nay," said Mapletoft, interrupting her, — with a countenance, however, little less ruffled by anxiety; — "we must listen, in order to learn."

"Indeed," continued the Major, "I feel myself awkwardly placed, in being compelled to break my intelligence — by degrees; — if I could open the whole like a picture at once before you, I might hope —"

"Gracious heaven! sir," exclaimed Mrs. Mapletoft again, anxious to be told a tale which, from the exordium, she yet dreaded to hear, "is your intelligence —"

"It is, I trust, of the most soothing nature; yet —"

"Yet what, Major Irwine?" cried the Vicar; "you torture us, sir."

"Well then," returned the Major, "I will go straight forward; and first — in me — you behold the wretch, you have been taught to abhor — the ravisher of your Ellice Craig."

"What!" screamed Mrs. Mapletoft, who with her husband had started from their respective seats, "you! you the lover —"

There is no saying what personal reflections were rising to the lady's lips, — upon the sudden conviction of her village Venus, having shared the connubial fate of her great archetype, — had not Mr. Mapletoft, in a voice that seemed intended to suppress every other, demanded an immediate explanation.

The Major smiled — and the smile gave great offence: — observing, "that it was for the purpose of explanation, that he had waited upon the worthy Pastor and his wife, and that, had he not been interrupted, the painful duty

would have sooner been performed." Requesting the host and hostess again to be seated, he continued, —

"I have indeed robbed you, my good neighbours, and allow me to say, my best friends," (here Mrs. Mapletoft was, with difficulty, pressed down into her chair by her husband), "of a treasure, which you only, — if I may be allowed to except myself, — knew duly how to appreciate; but still, when you know my claims — the sacred claims by which I hold her —" This was not to be borne.

"Then you have married her — forced her to the odious —"

"Pray, pray, madam, — allow me to finish one sentence, and then your comments must take their course. — I did not think that I should have had to encounter such suspicions as you seem to harbour. — I have not, I apprehend, much the appearance of a marrying man," said the Major, again smiling. — The smile was insult!

"Confusion, sir!" exclaimed the Vicar, starting on his legs, — who, with his good woman, formed on this occasion no unapt resemblance to a Dutch barometer, where the man pops out as the wife pops in, according to the tempera-

ture of the atmosphere, — "confusion, sir! — do you come to glory in your villany, and to insult us with —"

"I did hope, sir," cried the Major, rising also, and putting back his chair, with calm dignity, "that a Christian minister would at least have heard, even an offender, before he ventured to condemn him; — a lady's feelings may overpower her, and she may, in the tenderness of her nature, forget to proportion the penalty to the crime; — but before you, sir, ventured upon an expression which no man has ever yet dared, or felt a temptation even, to apply to my character, you should have recollected that Christian 'charity hopeth all things.' — I would not invade your province, Mr. Mapletoft, but you have put me to a severe trial — in my own —"

The Vicar stood more than abashed, by this reproof; he was self-condemned; he felt that a guilty man, could not have had such an advantage over him.

"I am wrong, Major Irwine," said he, "very wrong. — I beg your pardon."

"You have it, sir," cried the Major, resuming his seat; "I am wrong too, — but my narrative is of a nature, that puzzles all my ingenuity to find the point, at which I ought first

to set out. In short, you will be surprised — shocked perhaps, — when I discover to you that I am — the father of the angel being, who owes her life, — her virtues, — her all to you — best and kindest of —"

Here, had not his own tears checked his speech, the exclamations of surprise — of mixed, and almost agonized feelings of Mrs. Mapletoft, would have interrupted him; for, with a slight hysteric scream, which her attempt to speak had brought on, she lost her recollection, and fell into the arms of her husband, who, on his part, was so thunderstruck with what he had just heard, that he had nearly let her fall on the floor.

Every thing was done that is usual on such occasions; and the first storm of feeling being blown over, and the rapid evolutions of the brain, — which as rapidly arrange every thing in order for the reception of a new train of association, as they displace the old ones, — Major Irwine was seated, as an old friend between the Vicar and his wife, who admitted to herself, that he was neither so old nor ugly as she had before thought him, — and that his voice was certainly one of the sweetest, she had ever heard.

His story was not a very long, though an eventful one.

"It is unnecessary," he began, "to trouble you, with the details of my early life, or of my family, further than by stating, that the one is respectable, and the other marked, as usual, by the thousand-and-one scrapes, into which youth and independence are hurried by the animal spirits, and want of thought.

"Out of one of those, however, I found it more difficult to extricate myself, than I had calculated, and my father taking offence, when I conceived myself to be the injured person, I determined to abide by my own judgment, and to punish the presumption of my parent, by showing I could do without him.

"I resolved to become a volunteer in the army just, at the period, about to embark under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, for Egypt. The idea was no sooner suggested to my mind, than measures were taken to carry it into effect. I applied to a friend of my father's in London, who, after representing the romantic madness of the plan, — which tended the more strongly to recommend it to my adoption, — advanced me a sum of money sufficient to equip me, and gave me

a letter of introduction to an officer who had already left England, and was to have a command in the expedition. All this was very well; and experience might have had an opportunity of giving me a hearty whipping, and of sending me home a better boy, than when I started; but, alas! I was, I repeat, young and thoughtless, and romantic in every thing. I had united to my fortunes a sweet and amiable being, as thoughtless and romantic as myself, who entered into the plan with all the warmth, and ardour of her giddy husband.

"She was permitted to embark with me, for Malta, where the transports were to rendezvous; and, until we arrived off the coast of Africa, we laughed over our little wants, — left care to the winds, — and felt indifferent to the change of place, or climate. The transport however in which we sailed, having been badly found, suffered so severely in a gale of wind, soon after we had passed the straits, that she foundered, and, in spite of every precaution, went down: my beloved wife, myself, and seventeen other individuals, were all that escaped a watery grave, out of 500 persons with whom we had embarked.

" We were saved, by clinging to some wrecks of the vessel, which were floating about; and when light dawned upon our fate, we were happily discovered by another transport, — which, being in too shattered a condition to keep up with the main fleet, had also nearly foundered in the storm. She lay to, and received us on board; and our joy on seeing each other safe, was only alloyed by the recollection of the fate of so many of our ship-mates.

" When we landed at Malta, we seemed not to have a care in the world. In fact we had nothing in the world to care about, for the whole of our little dependance was gone — sunk in the merciless deep. What was to be done? The officer to whom my letter was addressed, had, I found, left Malta several weeks before, in order to join Sir Sidney Smith, in making preparations for the intended invasion of Egypt. To return to England was impracticable, without the means of purchasing a meal, and to wait for supplies from home, would require a period of abstinence and privation, which living souls could not well endure. The only expedient that presented itself, was to enlist as a private soldier in the regiment in which

it had been my intention to volunteer my services.

"I knew that I could, at my leisure, employ my interest at home, in redeeming my liberty; and, when I opened my last resource, with a face somewhat more grave than usual, to the beloved sharer of my fate, she welcomed it, as a most happy expedient,—and we rather laughed at a misfortune which had the air of an adventure, than wept over it as a source of regret.

"There was no objection to my wife remaining with me, which I made a preliminary to my enlistment, and within two days after my landing in Malta, I entered the 26th regiment under an assumed name, to prevent any unnecessary exposure of my family. We sailed in the beginning of the year 1801 for Egypt, and arrived at Aboukir, in the face of the enemy. Oh, madam, when I reflect," said the major, "on the horrors of that night and morning, and think what the sufferings and anxiety of my lost angel were, I may fairly date, at that early period of my life, the setting in of a storm, which was to cloud every future hour of my existence.

"Just previous to our debarkation, I had attracted, by some act of duty which I scarcely recollect, the attention of Lieutenant Ellice; and his kindness induced me,—in the hope that, should any accident befal me, he would protect my unfortunate wife,—to impart to him, in some measure, my situation, and the circumstances which had led to it. He promised to befriend me, and on the very eve of our landing, told me to behave well, and that he doubted not, on due representation of my case, a commission might be obtained from the commander-in-chief, who was the soldier's friend, and the patron of merit. Animated by his kindness, and still buoyant with sanguine hopes of distinction, I rushed among the foremost into the boats, which were to convey the troops, under the fire of the squadron, to the shore.

"I will confess, however, when the formidable resistance prepared by the French, presented itself, in the inactive state in which we lay upon our oars for hours, it served much to cool that ardour, and to bring home to my mind, reflections which ought sooner to have found a place there, when I recollected I had involved the

fate of an innocent and helpless being, who expected to be confined in a few weeks.

"Her torture I could well understand on beholding me thus exposed to the incessant play of batteries extended along a line of coast for nearly three miles, all directed towards one point. But reflection was as racking as it was new; and, when the word was given to advance, I felt, as if it were the signal of my safety, and my glory, I was among the first to spring forward to reach the top of the sand-hills, and to aid in turning the cannon which had so long galled us, against the flying detachments of the enemy. But I grow tedious —"

"Far, far from it," cried Mrs. Mapletoft; — "the scene is now before me. Poor young lady!"

"I was actively engaged in the glorious action of the 21st of March, before Alexandria; and ere the brave Abercrombie fell, I was left for dead upon the field of battle. I still retained some recollection; and call to mind, at this distance of time, the shock I felt, on hearing the sound of my beloved wife, moaning over my body. How long I remained in this situation, I know not; but when I came to my

senses, I found myself in a strange place, and surrounded by men, dressed in the habits of the east. A comrade, whom I knew by the regimental coat thrown over his mattrass, lay near me; but I found myself incapable of uttering a word, or making an inquiry.

"For several weeks I remained in this state, receiving from the persons around me, every attention it was in their power to bestow upon me. I could obtain no intelligence of my real situation, until my comrade, whose wounds were slighter than mine, was able to discharge the office of nurse,—which strangers had performed for him, —to a countryman and fellow-sufferer. I found he was a corporal in the 26th, who knew me by sight; and from him I learned all that remained to be told, of my sad and melancholy fate. My kind friend, Lieutenant Ellice, had, after the battle, found me dead, as he supposed: and, alas!—which more immediately attracted his benevolent attention,—my poor, poor wife lay insensible, and apparently dead beside me!"

Here the Major could not suppress a flood of tears, to which, from the recollection of her in-

terest in the scene, Mrs. Mapletoft paid a sympathizing tribute.

"Yes — he found youth, — beauty, — virtue, breathing out its last sigh upon her disfigured husband, having prematurely given birth to a daughter, whose cries even, could not win her back to the world. But how was my horror, madam, augmented, when I heard that, a few days after, the brave Lieutenant Ellice had himself fallen in the action of the 23d, and that his widow had availed herself of a vessel, carrying home despatches, to take her voyage to England!"

"Alas!" observed Mrs. Mapletoft, "you were too well informed. I left the country three days after I had consigned all that remained of the unfortunate Ellice, to a soldier's grave."

"When I was sufficiently recovered," continued the Major, "to crawl forth from the tent, which had been my hospital, I laboured to seek further information, respecting my poor wife, and the child so inauspiciously brought into the world: but the troops had been some time in advance towards Caïro, and my ignorance of the language of the country, cut me off

from any communication with the people, around me. I learned from my wounded companion, that he and myself had been found, the day after the engagement, by an old Scheik, whose family had been rescued from destruction by the active intrepidity of Sir Sidney Smith, previous to the arrival of the British troops; and that, perceiving some signs of life in us, he had been induced to repay that gallant officer's kindness, on the heads of his suffering countrymen. He had us conveyed to his tents; and, being obliged to join the army, had left us to the care of his family, who had watched and attended us with the greatest humanity. I scarcely knew whether I ought to be grateful to this good man, for restoring me to a life, whose charm was now lost to me, or to regret a kindness so ill bestowed.

" But this was the peevish thought of a moment; and, if I could recover my child, I conceived I had something yet to live for. My wounds closed slowly, and I found that my features, which, it is no longer vanity to say, were once thought good, were changed and disfigured in a manner, that rendered me, for years, an object, almost of disgust. I do not

mean to say," observed the Major, smiling, "that they *even now* are of the Adonis caste —"

"I'm sure," said the good-natured Mrs. Mapletoft, "there is nothing — "

"The less," continued the Major, still smiling, "said, madam, upon that subject, the better. Well, my good friends, not to tire you with details, I at length was enabled to proceed to Cairo, just before the capitulation had been signed, and was witness, from the caravansera in which I was lodged, to the most interesting sight of General Baird and his little Indian army, joining their countrymen, from the opposite side of the globe, after having traversed the Theban desert for ten whole days.

"I was found incapable of joining my regiment; and, indeed, I had no wish to prosecute my Quixotic plan further than was necessary, to secure me from famine, and enable me to find a passage to Europe. I made every enquiry after my child, but could gain no satisfactory intelligence respecting it. I had no clew to the notion of Mr. Ellice having adopted the infant, and only supposed he had given it to some soldier's wife to nurse; but, after the strictest investigation among my old associates, I could find none that answered the description — none that

could afford me the slightest information upon the subject.

In conversing one morning with an intelligent serjeant, who had come with the army from India, and whose accounts of their voyage, and subsequent difficulties, had arrested my attention, he mentioned incidentally the services of a Captain Irwine, whose knowledge of the country, had enabled him to afford many useful suggestions, during the expedition. I was struck with the name; and conceiving he might be a relation, whom I remembered to have been, early in life, sent out to India, — resolved, if upon enquiry I found this to be the case, to address myself to him, and obtain his assistance, if possible, to extricate me from the situation, in which my fatal inconsiderateness had involved me, and to enable me, to return to my friends, in England.

" I proceeded to his quarters, and found my most sanguine hopes realized; for I no sooner made myself known to him, than, espousing my interests, he insisted upon my immediately becoming one of his family, and lost not a day in procuring my discharge. He treated me as if I had been a son, and his affectionate kindness so endeared him to me, that when

General Baird was ordered back to India, he easily persuaded me to return with him, promising—what he felt secure of performing,—to obtain for me a commission in his own regiment,—in which several vacancies had occurred from the effects of the climate, and the privations to which the troops had been exposed in their perilous voyage, and march over the desert.

"Rumours of peace soon reached the country, and before the end of the year, I received a commission in Captain Irwine's company, and returned with him to India. There I continued for many years,—having received no encouragement from my family to return home,—and fortune smiling upon my patron as well as myself, I had no reason to complain of a situation, which afforded me every comfort and luxury of life, and would have constituted my happiness,—could I have banished the recollection of the past, and the regrets, that the fatal effects of my supposed death, had deprived me of a being, who would indeed have given happiness and content, to the rudest scene of the desert.

"Colonel Irwine,—for he had now attained that rank,—was a great favourite at head quarters, and whenever any measure of importance, came under consideration, the governor-general

never failed to call him to his councils. My interest he had perfectly indentified with his own, and being ready enough to redeem lost time under so wise and able a guide, I rose into favour with my protector and friend. But I will not dwell on scenes, which lead me from my point, and must be uninteresting to you, my good friends."

"By no means," said Mr. Mapletoft; "we are —"

"We are only," cried the wife, "anxious to know how you discovered —"

"I thought so," said the Major, smiling; "and I will keep you no longer in suspense. Early in the last year, I lost my friend and benefactor; — he had been engaged up the country in a negociation, with one of the native powers, and ardent, as in his most boyish days, he wished to convey the intelligence of his success to his employers, as expeditiously as possible. A fever was the consequence, and the termination of his honourable and valuable life followed. — I dwell not on my feelings," said the Major, in a broken voice: "I had lost my only friend — but he was my friend, even when his heart ceased to beat, and from the grave his voice spake — for though a will was the last thing

I should ever have thought of seeking, in the state of mind to which I was reduced, — others were not so inattentive, and, upon examining his papers, it was discovered, that, after leaving a few legacies among friends, and to some public institutions which he had fostered during his lifetime, — he had bequeathed to me the bulk of his princely fortune.

"I felt his kindness, his more than parental love, — but his wealth was useless to me; I had no ambition; I seemed to have no affection left for others. Love I had felt but once, and for a fleeting moment, but its memory faded not away; — friendship I had experienced but once, and he that inspired it was gone; my spirits, — my mind was subdued, and in this state, the effect of climate first seemed to operate upon my constitution. I was for several weeks in a state, which appeared to baffle the skill of medicine; a favourable change took place, however, and new scenes opened upon me, as I recovered.

"I was at length well enough to accept an invitation from the Governor-general, to dine at the Government House. During the repast, the conversation, — which arose out of some observations upon the services and character of my

late friend, — turned upon the expedition to Egypt, in the course of which an officer, lately arrived from England, alluded to his having been the bearer of despatches home, after the battles in the neighbourhood of Alexandria. Without being aware of any particular object I had in view, I made some desultory observations upon the occurrences of that portion of the campaign, in which I had suffered so much; but when he mentioned, incidentally, that he had taken charge of a most interesting widow and child, of an officer, killed in one of the actions, I felt a sort of electric spark, shoot through my brain, and heart; — I could not stop to analyze the feeling, but, almost convulsed, demanded the officer's name. He mentioned Ellice. I had nearly forgotten it. — I started — a confused hope had found its way to my heart, and conjured up the phantom of a possibility that my wife might have been saved; but, alas! I remembered at the same moment, that I had heard the sad details of her interment before I left the country.

"My faculties were benumbed, and I perceived nothing but the effect of the disappointment, I had so weakly prepared for myself. The officer had paused on perceiving the agitation he had

awakened, but soon afterwards asked, in a voice of sympathizing enquiry, if — if Lieutenant Ellice — had been known to me. *Then*, for the first time, something like the truth flashed upon my mind; "A child, did you say, sir?" I demanded, with an air of wildness. — He answered in the affirmative.

"I knew, madam, that you had no child. — I felt it possible, — probable, — certain, that you had adopted my orphan. She might live — she might be deploring the loss of a father who had abandoned her — the thought was distraction.

"I rose abruptly from the table; complained of a relapse, hardly knowing what I did. I threw myself on my bed on my return to my house, fearing that the confusion of my thoughts, might bring back all the evils from which I had so recently escaped. I had now, I thought, something to live for, — at least to hope; and to a being who had nothing on earth for his affections to dwell on, — this was joy. I fell upon my knees, and, appealing to Heaven for fortitude, to uphold me under evil, or prosperous fortune, found myself capable of reflecting, and setting about the execution of the measure, which, as it was the first, so was it the last and only suggestion of my imagination. To remain

in suspense, — to await inquiry, was out of the question. The ships of the season were about to return to Europe, and my affairs were soon settled. A rich man has always influence enough to do, and to act as he wills. — I issued my orders, and they were executed without delay or difficulty.

" In less than a week after the conversation at the Governor's table, I was settled in the cabin, whose doors were to open upon the shores of England, before I again exchanged it for any other *human* habitation, at least. I had obtained from General Merton —"

" I recollect him," cried Mrs. Mapletoft; " he was then Captain Merton. Indeed! indeed! I am deeply indebted to him, for attentions during the voyage, without which, I must have sunk under my misfortunes."

" From him, madam," continued the Major, " I received such particulars as tended to confirm my hopes. He told me that he had been quartered in the neighbourhood of Clifton, a few years back, and been charmed with the beauty of a little girl, who, with its mother, was sitting in a landau, at a review, or field day; that he was acting as inspecting field-officer, and

having approached the carriage to remove some dragoons, who kept the ground, and seemed to impede her view, the attention was received with so grateful a smile by the child, that he could not avoid stopping to admire it — that whilst apologizing to the lady for his intrusion, he was struck with the conviction of having seen her before, and upon an explanation taking place, he had subsequently visited Mrs. Ellice, as Mrs. Mapletoft, at a place called Oldysleigh, a few miles from Durdham Down.

"It appears, that he concluded the child to be yours," the Major continued, "but I would not suffer him to urge any reasons for thinking so; — I had laid in my stock of hope for a long voyage, and when I compelled him to acknowledge that he had never directly asked the question, — I declared him incompetent to decide upon it.

"Six weeks ago, I returned to my native land, and my first visit, — I need not say, — was to this neighbourhood. — I made my inquiries with caution, and so apt are we to labour at deceiving ourselves, that I have often broken them off abruptly, when they seemed to tend to the dispersion, of my hopes. The lodge upon the

green was vacant; I purchased it without hesitation, and the taste of a Bristol builder — employed to repair it for my reception, — has, I find, been attributed to my eastern notions of magnificence; — the fact is, I had neither feelings, nor taste to employ upon the subject; — they were entirely absorbed in the Vicarage, whither my steps were regularly directed, whenever darkness would admit of my watching, without being observed.

"I could gain no direct intelligence; I found the child was called Ellice, or Miss Ellice, by the various cottagers, among whom my inquiries were chiefly made; and although I, every day, resolved to ascertain my fate at once, by revealing myself to you, madam, and the worthy Vicar, I as often postponed my resolution, from the dread of having my hopes abruptly and irremediably crushed.

"It was in vain I endeavoured to throw myself in the way of the dear child, in order to trace her features; she was constantly accompanied either by yourself, or young Owen, or Mr. Wettenhall. — My presence was suddenly required in town by the India Board, and I was compelled to leave the spot, without having

taken any definite measure, to ascertain my fate. I left behind me, however, a zealous and indefatigable coadjutor in my friend, — rather than servant, — Morton, who was my wounded companion in the battle of Alexandria, and has remained ever since in my service.

" In a few days I was at liberty, and flew back like a bird, who had too long deserted a solitary young one, in its nest. Morton told me he thought he had made some discoveries, but that certain circumstances had just come to his knowledge, which would require prompt measures, in order to prevent my hopes, — if they should be well founded, — from being frustrated, in a manner, which I certainly had not anticipated.

" The zealous affection of this most faithful of servants, had led him to associate with all descriptions of persons, and spending his money freely among them, he soon became welcome, wherever he made his appearance. On the day preceding my return, he had been at the Plough, a little inn, in the village, about two miles distant, and the landlord, with a knowing and confidential nod, observed, — that some queer things would soon come out, at the Squire's, at Oldys-

leigh. Morton was too much on his guard to betray a desire to know more, than his host seemed disposed to communicate. He replied, therefore, in a careless manner, that 'he and his master knew little of their neighbours, and were indifferent as to what they did, one way or another.'

" 'Aye, aye,' said mine host, more anxious to tell, in proportion as the indifference of his companion was perceived; 'but this is a matter — I'm pretty sure — its something —'

" 'I suppose,' returned Morton, smiling, 'the old gentleman's going to make a fool of himself, and marry.'

" 'No — no such thing: it's the young fool. No, no — I don't mean to say that either. — Mind, — I say nothing.'

" In short, after much circumlocution, to prove that he was betraying nothing, he *did* betray that Mr. Wettenhall, the heir presumptive to Sir Luke's property, had ordered four horses, — the landlord himself only keeping a pair, — from Bristol, which, to avoid observation, were to be sent to his stables before day-light, the succeeding day, and to be kept ready harnessed, for the purpose of some secret expedition. In the

course of the next morning, Morton learned further, — that the horses and carriage were to repair, by a circuitous road, to a very solitary spot in Oldysleigh park, — called Barton Coppice, as soon as it was dusk.

" Morton was satisfied, after the most minute enquiry, that Miss Ellice was the object of all these preparations; but whether with, or without her own consent, was not so easy to be ascertained. In my view of the case, the distinction was of no consequence. — I armed myself and Morton, and determined, — after I had arranged my plan so as to ensure success, if any interference should prove necessary, — to watch the proceedings of the parties as closely as possible, in order to pick up such further particulars, as might throw a light, upon this mysterious business.

" Fortune favoured me beyond my hopes. As I was skirting the very coppice, — under the cover of which the adventure of the evening was to be achieved, for the purpose of making myself, like an old soldier, master of the field, — my ears were suddenly assailed by a female shriek, and at the same moment I saw Miss Ellice flying from an apparently, infuriated

stag. I ran to her assistance, as nimbly as my shattered frame would permit me; but, before I had arrived at the spot, she was already under the guard of two champions, who, instead of allowing me any share in the glory of delivering her, were at high words, and nearly at open war — in disputing that glory with each other. Mr. Owen, however, bore off the prize in triumph, in a manner which clearly evinced, that his captive wore her chains without feeling any dread, or apprehension, of their galling, or distressing her.

" This threw a new light upon the business; and I was resolved to probe Mr. Wettenhall, in order to draw from him, in an unguarded moment, if possible, the nature of his attachment, and the ultimate object he had in view. He shrunk from the operation; but I saw enough from his symptoms, to conclude his intentions were —"

" Honourable, of course," cried Mrs. Mapletoft, — interrupting the narrative, in her anxiety to gain information.

" Doubtful, at least," rejoined the Major; " and I took my measures accordingly. The drivers I had secured by bribes, which the

young gentleman could not have anticipated, and, therefore, could not exceed. Morton accompanied me to the coppice, early in the afternoon, where we lay concealed till the dusk approached, and the carriage was on its way to the rendezvous. Shortly after, we perceived Mr. Wettenhall, and Ellice Craig advancing slowly, towards us."

"Pen Owen, you mean, I presume," observed Mr. Mapletoft, calmly.

"No, sir," said the Major — "I am correct —"

"What can this mean?" exclaimed the wife.

"They approached the spot where we stood, concealed by some bushes," continued the Major. "I heard the young gentleman pleading his cause as a lover, in which vows were largely pledged, and his sufferings most eloquently set forth, but which received no return, beyond that of entreaties from the anxious girl, that he would avoid Pen Owen, and pass over the irritation, which his rashness had that morning, occasioned. The lover more ardently urged that she had it in her power, to set that question wholly at rest, by returning his affection, and rejecting his rival. An indignant answer fol-

lowed, and in a moment — a shrill whistle was heard. This was the signal agreed upon; and Wettenhall, seizing his intended victim round the waist, was bearing her, screaming, towards the carriage — "

" Impossible!" exclaimed Mrs. Mapletoft.

" Abandoned!" sighed the vicar.

" Have patience, my dear madam. — We rushed forward; and Morton, — who is a strong and powerful man, — seized the lover, and, holding a pistol to his breast, drew him into the recess, which we had just quitted."

" Why, my dear sir," again cried Mrs. Mapletoft, shedding a flood of tears, " we looked upon this young man as a paragon — a — "

" Nay, madam, — he may not be so bad, as your imagination is at work, to paint him."

" Listen, my love," said the vicar; " let us hear the whole, before we judge."

" All resistance on his part," continued the Major, " was fruitless; for he soon saw, he had lost his allies, the post-boys. — I addressed myself to the almost fainting girl, who wept her thanks, for the service I had rendered her. ' Think me not,' I said, ' so disinterested, as I

may appear to be, madam. I have an interest— an affection deep rooted in my heart, that draws me to you — which perhaps unites us, — nay, identifies our fate.'

"She shrunk back, apparently thinking herself not much benefited, by the exchange of lovers," said the Major, smiling. 'I have,' I continued, 'but one single question to ask; and on that depends my life — my hopes — my all!'

"She shuddered.

"'Tell me,' I asked, 'who — who were your parents?'

"She seemed relieved, but, at the same time — hurt, and offended.

"'Oh, think not,' I cried, 'that I am urged by curiosity, or influenced by any frivolous motive. — You are not the child of Mr. Mapletoft?'

"'No, sir,' she replied. —

"'Are you — are you?' — I could not proceed.

"'I am, sir,' she answered, 'an orphan — born.'—

"'On the field of battle?' I demanded, trembling.

"'She started —'

" 'The child of—'

" 'The child of nobody—the child of—'

" 'Of a doating,—too blessed,—too happy father,' I exclaimed, in an agony of bliss.

" She fell senseless in my arms.—I bore her to the carriage.—It was the thought of the moment.—I desired Morton to release his prisoner; and, addressing myself to him, told him, at his peril to reveal what he had heard, until he received my sanction to do so;—I added, that his honour, perhaps his life, was in my hands; and his compliance with my demands, admitted of no alternative. We drove off, and, taking a wide circuit, in order to mislead those, who might observe, or trace the carriage, pursued a lane which communicated with my own paddock, and conveyed my still senseless treasure, by a private door, into the house of—HER FATHER!

" She was soon restored to her senses; but her recollections were imperfect, and it was not until I had again repeated the assurance, of my own blessing, that she was fully aware, of our relative situation.—You, my dearest, and most revered friends, who have known her from her infancy,—to whom she is indebted for the cultivation of a mind, equalled only by the

loveliness of her form, may judge of her feelings, and the manner in which she received the first benediction of a parent, of whose existence, she had no previous conception."

Here the emotions of the party, were too strong to be restrained. The fond, and grateful Father, pressed to his bosom, the protectors of his child, and was pressed to theirs, with equal warmth, in that sacred character; — at length, after a pause, given to this ebullition of feeling, Mrs. Mapletoft asked "where was her child, for such she must always esteem her? — why she had been so long kept away? — and why she was not with the Major now?"

He smiled through his tears, and answered "that he thought the scene was already sufficiently agitating, without any addition; and that, even as it was, he had not been adroit enough to bring about the explanation, — without incurring some hazard."

Mrs. Mapletoft coloured; and the Vicar only replied, by taking his hand, between both his, and pressing them, with the reverence, of internal esteem.

He resumed the conversation. "As to your remaining questions, my dear madam, they require a more particular, and detailed expla-

nation. It was scarcely less painful to me, than to my dear child, to keep you in any suspense, or uncertainty, respecting her fate; but I saw, or thought I saw, in the character of young Wettenhall, a desperation of purpose, which, without withdrawing the object from his machinations, might render my new discovery, but a dream of joy,—which the destroyer might dissipate at a blow.

"When the activity of pursuit had sufficiently vented itself, to afford me a clear field, I replaced my beloved child in the carriage; and about two hours after midnight, finding that Wettenhall, and Pen Owen, had taken the two main roads to London, proceeded, without changing horses, to Upton, and thence through Worcester, to the North of England, where business, respecting a property devolved to me from my friend the Colonel, would necessarily have called me, in the course of a few weeks.

"By this manœuvre I felt secure of eluding the vigilance, of both the pursuers of my child; the one, because he had no clew whatever to her discovery; the other, because he had a clew, which would quickly have enabled him to carry his projects, whatever they might be, into effect, if I had either remained at

home, or proceeded in any direct road. From York, I despatched the first letter to you, my good friends; and I could not resist the intreaty of my child, soon after, to assure you of her safety and satisfaction under her own hand —"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mrs. Mapletoft, "we construed that letter, into an admission of her marriage, with Pen Owen—whom the vile hypocrite, Wettenhall, led us to believe, had stolen her away from us."

"Pen Owen!—No, Madam," said the Major, apparently much agitated; "no, he was really ignorant; — but surely Wettenhall didn't impute the —"

"He did worse, my dear sir," cried Mapletoft, striking the ground with his foot; "he insinuated, — he led us to infer —"

"Yes," said Mrs. Mapletoft, interrupting him; "and though he knew all the time, what disgrace the poor dear Pen was in, never led us to suppose, he might be innocent—"

"That would have proved himself guilty," observed the Major; "but come, my dear Madam, I fear I have more surprises in store for you; and I doubt very much, whether the condemnation of Mr. Wettenhall, will go far to

acquit your favourite Mr. Pen Owen, — of whom, indeed, it was the first wish of my heart, to believe all, I had been taught to think of him."

"Surely," cried Mrs. Mapletoft, "you have proved him innocent of the crime, for which he has been so unjustly condemned, —and banished."

"True, my dear madam; but from the moment, in which I discovered his attachment to my beloved child, and still more, when I ascertained that the passion was reciprocal, it became the chief, — the sole study and object of my life, to watch, and to analyse his conduct. Her happiness was too precious, to be risked upon an experiment."

"He has not," asked Mr. Mapletoft, "conducted himself with any impropriety, towards her, I trust?"

"I have taken good care of that," answered the Major; "for he is as ignorant of the place of her retirement, as of my connection with her. I met him in London, and by every attention in my power, endeavoured to cultivate his acquaintance, and friendship, but suddenly —nay, rudely, and without the most remote provocation on my part, —he not only slighted, but absolutely

spurned me. — I thought it probable that some slander had poisoned his mind, and I sought for an opportunity of explanation; but before I could attain my object, I found him, — by an act of extreme rashness and imprudence, to call it by the mildest name, — involved in a very serious offence, against the House of Commons, in which he resisted every offer of accommodation, as well as the advice, or suggestion of those, who would have befriended him. I saw nothing vicious in this, — but there was much to be apprehended from such intemperance, by a father, anxiously interested, in the future happiness of his daughter. — He was committed to Newgate."

"In that too," observed Mr. Mapletoft, "we were deceived. — We thought he had been more criminal. — I don't wish to palliate his rashness — far from it." —

"I was disposed to make every allowance," continued Major Irwine; "and as he had laid open to me in part, the state of his circumstances, I dreaded his being exposed, in such a state of mind, to the additional misery of finding himself without resources. I therefore *contrived* to supply his necessities, — without offending his pride."

"You sent him the hundred pounds, then," cried the vicar.

"How! — what can you know —"

"Poor fellow," cried Mrs. Mapletoft, "he was charged with having fabricated the story of an anonymous gift, for a purpose too mean to be —"

"Hold there, madam," said the Major, interrupting her, "meanness, I believe, cannot be charged upon him. His passions may lead him into error — into vice, — but I think I have read his character, sufficiently to be assured that there is nothing mercenary in it."

"He could not have learnt it," cried the lady, looking proudly on her husband, "from him, who laboured to instil good principles, into his mind."

"His principles, my dear," — answered the vicar, drily repelling the compliment, — "in the best view we can take of them, are not likely to reflect any great lustre, upon those, who may be supposed, to be responsible for them."

There was a harshness in the expression of the good vicar's countenance, and in his words, very unusual, — and his wife was silenced. — The Major eyed him with an inquisitive glance, but

said nothing.—Mr. Mapletoft perceived the effect of his observation, and he added,

"It is a comfort, however, to find that on some points, his errors have been exaggerated, and our suspicions, upon others, even unfounded; but think, sir—conceive the excesses to which his intemperance could lead him, when he rashly dared to pen a challenge to his venerable—and respected uncle—"

"Is it possible!"

"I could not have conceived it to be so," answered the vicar; "but here is the proof," producing Pen's unfortunate note, intended for the Major, which, by confounding persons with the association of place, he had addressed to Caleb Owen, Esq., instead of Major Irwine, at Oldysleigh. The vicar added, "I fortunately intercepted it, and saved his good uncle that shock, at least."

"Depend upon it," said the Major, reading it a second time, "there is some mistake here.—His duty and affection towards his uncle, were too evident to be questioned, whenever his name occurred in our few conversations. Nay," added he, looking at the date, "he appears, all along, to have been influenced by some error re-

specting myself, which I never could account for — and which renders it probable this challenge was intended for me, for there was an armed battery in his looks, the last time I accidentally encountered him."

"Bad enough, in all conscience," observed Mrs. Mapletoft; "but not so bad as —"

"No," interrupted the vicar, smiling; "there may be an alternative between a parricide, and a murderer, left for him. — It is, however, some consolation, as we proceed, to find that from all his excesses, we have hitherto been able to make some deduction, — and we must e'en hope for more in our further progress."

"Spoken like yourself," cried his wife, now looking up, in his face, "and who knows, but that he may come fresh, and pure out of the waters of adversity."

"We interrupt the Major," was the reply of Mapletoft, — whose smile was that of incredulity, she thought.

The Major then entered into a detail of circumstances, in which the conduct of our hero, certainly did not appear to advantage. He feared he had formed bad connexions, and mentioned the disgraceful scene, by which his

daughter had been shocked, when she, for the first time, had left her house, for the purpose, he added, " of paying a charitable visit, to the unfortunate Mrs. Weston —"

" Weston !" exclaimed Mapletoft, with a look of eager enquiry.

" What about Mrs. Weston? who is *she?*" demanded Mrs. Mapletoft, — who had watched the turn and direction of her husband's eye.

" Nothing, my dear — you don't —"

" She is half-sister to my servant — my — "

The Major, too, had observed the expression of the vicar's countenance, and caught a sigh, that seemed to come from the bottom, of his heart. " I see," he added, " my apprehensions are too well founded."

" Not *now*," said Mapletoft, with something like an imploring look, whilst the eye of his wife was averted.

" Mr. Wettenhall," the Major went on to say, " upon whom I thought it expedient to set a watch, on my first arrival in town, — by some means unknown to me, discovered the place of my abode, and artfully sought to obtain an interview with my daughter. — I have since learned, she was even imprudent enough

to promise at length to see him, in consequence of a solemn assurance that he had something to reveal to her, which was essential to the character of her friend, Pen Owen, and to the future happiness of her life. Accidentally, I returned home on the evening of the appointment, in time to frustrate the plan, although Morton traced him to the door; and I have since discovered that he was actually in my house, and concealed, within a cabinet, in my room. — I met him soon after; and he expressed his contrition in terms of so much apparent sincerity, that I am almost induced to think, I have judged too harshly of him. In one respect, his conduct has been truly honourable — "

"I'm glad of that, at least," said Mrs. Mapletoft.

"In what respect?" asked the husband.

"He has condescended to seek a reconciliation with that impetuous young man, Pen Owen, for the purpose of withdrawing him, if possible, from the connexions he appears to have formed, and to restore him to his friends, before he has involved himself, in more serious difficulties."

"That is, indeed, praiseworthy," observed the vicar; "but there is still something mysterious and unexplained, in the conduct of this young man. He certainly has never directly communicated any thing to the disadvantage of Pen; — and yet —"

"True," cried Mrs. Mapletoft; "but he has never returned from town without convincing us, that he knew more, than he chose to communicate; — besides, — he never undeceived us, with respect to poor Ellice."

"That may be accounted for, my dear madam," said the Major, "by the pledge which I demanded from him, when he became master of my secret."

They entered now into the various details respecting the conduct, of our unfortunate hero, which, as we, who have all along been admitted to his confidence, are already acquainted with, and cannot but own, might, with very slight colouring, be easily converted into high crimes and misdemeanors against the prescribed laws of social life, — it may be imagined, did not very much increase the balance, on the credit-side of the account.

The Major now took his departure, — having previously stolen an occasion for a few words with Mapletoft, on his wife's leaving the room, — and being obliged to return immediately to town where he had left his daughter, he promised to return with her in a few days, and to reinstate her in the hearts of those connexions, who had been endeared to her, from her earliest youth.

It may be supposed, that this interesting conversation would have been immediately transferred to the little council at Oldysleigh; but, at the particular request of the Major, the domestic explanations were to remain, for the present, confined to their own breasts; and, as far as Wettenhall was concerned, Mapletoft was disposed to withhold every thing, which could tend to wound, or distress Sir Lyke, — until he had some more sufficient authority upon which, to ground a conclusive opinion.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sir Luke Oldysworth, had been one morning closetted for several hours with his lawyer, when Mr. Mapletoft entered the room; and the baronet, pointing to some papers, which lay upon the table, informed him, that they contained the necessary documents, for the conveyance of New Manor, (an outlying estate on the borders of Dorsetshire,) to young Wettenhall.

"It is but right," added he, "that the heir to this property, should, even in my lifetime, possess an independence; and if he choose it,—an establishment suited to his rank and future situation in life. This will answer the purpose to a certain degree; and although the house is of a moderate size,—an estate of about two thousand a year round it, will, at least, enable him to make himself comfortable, during

the short time, I may keep him out of the entailed property."

Mapletoft expressed some surprise, at the sudden adoption of a measure, upon which he had never been consulted, — as was usually the case, even in the most trivial matters; and which, to say the least of it, was of a nature, which required deliberation, and forethought. "Besides," added the good vicar, "it is, if I understand the case rightly, the only disposable property; — that is, the only property, which is not entailed upon the heir."

"It is so," answered the baronet.

"Surely, then," resumed Mapletoft, "it would be better, to make the young man an allowance equal, or greater, if you will; but not to part with that, which gives you a power and authority, to act towards him eventually, as his conduct may deserve."

"The young man is worthy and amiable; and his conduct towards me, peculiarly gratifying."

"Your knowledge of him, Sir Luke," observed the vicar, "is short, and necessarily imperfect; he *may* be, all that is excellent; — still to render him wholly independent upon you, is an experiment —"

" Which I should not have been disposed to make," returned the baronet, " if — if —"

" If what, Sir Luke?"

" If — but I am betraying a secret, which —"

" I do not wish to penetrate into your secrets, Sir Luke," said the vicar. —

" Not mine!" returned the baronet; " I have none, as you well know; and this is the only point on which I have not consulted you for many years past."

" I confess, it was that which surprised me; it is a point, too, — of some importance."

" Then it is vain to act longer on the reserve with you, my good friend," cried the baronet; " the young man — in short, here is a letter, I received from him a few days ago."

Mr. Mapletoft took the letter, which was couched in the most respectful and affectionate terms. It stated, that the writer had met with a young lady in every respect, he felt assured, suitable to the wishes, and prospects, entertained by Sir Luke for his heir; — that there were circumstances of delicacy, which rendered the disclosure of her name, and family, for the present, impossible. — That although he trusted,

the day was far distant, when he should possess the means in his own right, of settling upon a wife a suitable provision, he thought it might be advisable, even under existing circumstances, to prove to the lady, that he had no mercenary objects in view, in marrying her.

The subject, though delicate, was treated in a manner that could give no alarm to Sir Luke, although he could not doubt, that the young man alluded to the property in question, which the baronet, in the openness of his heart, had more than once, given him reason to conclude, would go with the other estates, to his heir. When Mapletoft had finished reading the letter, he folded it up, and turned it between his fingers; — then re-opened it, and read again particular paragraphs — but said nothing.

The baronet stared, and so, perhaps, may the reader, — especially if he be not of that order of beings, who shrink from giving pain to a friend, and who prefer silence on a doubtful point, to that eager desire, evinced by too many persons, of communicating intelligence, if it be calculated to surprise, even though it should carry with it, a venomed shaft to the heart of a "very good friend."

Mapletoft was not one of those; — he had carefully kept from the baronet, the suspicions entertained by Major Irwine, and communicated in his recent conversation with him, respecting young Wettenhall. He would have done so, out of regard, and pity for the old man, even had those suspicions been confirmed; but whilst there was a doubt, or a hope upon the subject, he had determined to remain silent. This letter, however cautiously worded, awakened an apprehension in the mind of the vicar, not very favourable to the young man, under the circumstances in which his character had been placed by the Major, and the mysterious allusion to a mistress — and the plea of secresy, where there appeared no motive for concealment, at least towards Sir Luke, tended to increase his suspicions. He was, therefore, embarrassed, and unable to reply to the twice-repeated question of Sir Luke, — "what he thought of it?"

At length — he recurred to his former observation, on the necessity of care, and deliberation, in a matter of so much importance. — "Take time," added he; "take time, my dear sir, at least, — to re-consider the matter."

"There it is," cried the baronet, smiling; "half confidences only beget distrust; and we must out with the last drop — to save one's own consistency. You must know, then — in short — look — here is a second letter, which I received by express, yesterday, and which, I would not for the world, our good friend Caleb should see; it would break his heart — this — this renders it necessary to act, without delay."

The second letter which Mapletoft now opened, was written in a tone of distraction, — stating the circumstances of the duel with Lord Killcullane, and the probable consequences, of the writer's rash acquiescence, in the demand of his services, by Pen Owen, — whose conduct, however, he represented in the most favourable manner. He painted, the distraction of his mind, on being compelled to fly his country; — at least, until the fate of his Lordship was ascertained, — and the sufferings of the lady, to whom he was attached, as little short of his own. He trusted, that Sir Luke would not suffer any prejudice to arise in his mind, if in the ardent feelings of the moment, she had consented, to be the partner, of his flight; which, however, he had self-denial and fortitude suffi-

cient to decline, as it was not in his power to place her in that rank of society, which her birth, and virtues, were calculated to adorn.

He gave his address, at an inn on the Dover road, where he was, he said, for the present concealed; and requested a letter from Sir Luke, to speak his forgiveness, — if he could be brought to pardon the rash conduct, into which he had been drawn, — as his only consolation, under the pangs, and sufferings of his exile.

When Mapletoft had finished the perusal, the baronet said, "You see, it is utterly impossible, after this, to leave the poor lad, without a suitable provision. I have written to him — and Ferrett will have finished the papers by the afternoon, when I shall send them off, by express. — You see no objection to this, Mr. Mapletoft?"

"Indeed, Sir Luke," answered the vicar, — "I see no necessity for it."

"It will be a balm, to his mind."

"The balm, may be applied too soon; — he should suffer, for his rashness."

"It was your favourite Pen's rashness, — not his."

"True! I defend not Pen; — I grieve for

him; but — Pen's VICE is rashness. — Mr. Wettenhall has not hitherto, shewn any symptoms of that nature."

"So much the better."

"So much the more remarkable, — at least!"

"It was friendship for that boy, that led him to forget himself."

"He *did not* forget himself, — when his friendship was put to a *severer* test."

"Why, surely, Mapletoft, — *you* don't condemn him, for not accepting Pen's rude challenge!"

"Far from it! — but I *do* condemn him for not preventing Pen, from accepting this!"

Mr. Mapletoft found it easy, upon entering more fully into the discussion, to shake the resolution of a man, who, from the habit of many years, had never acted without the advice, and counsel of his friends. The baronet consented to despatch the letter, which contained only a gentle remonstrance upon the young man's imprudent conduct; — and a promise of interest, and assistance, in extricating him, from his difficulties. He reserved all explanation to their future meeting; and replacing the deeds in the drawer of his study-table, was in the act

of sealing the letter, when the door suddenly opened, and before the servants could announce him, — young Wettenhall rushed into the room, covered with dust, and his dress in the utmost disorder!

Having hastily, but respectfully saluted Sir Luke, he sunk into a chair, and striking his forehead with his hands, requested "an immediate, and *private* audience" of the baronet.

The latter looked surprised, — and Mapletoft arose; but recollecting himself, Sir Luke touched the vicar's arm, and beckoning to him to resume his seat, told the young man, that his friend, Mr. Mapletoft, was informed of every thing; — and that he never acted without his judgment, in any case of importance.

Wettenhall started from his chair: "Sir," cried he, in a voice half-checked by emotion, "whatever Mr. Mapletoft may *know*, — that which I have further to communicate, must be for *your* ear alone."

"Be calm, be quiet, Frank; sit down," cried the baronet, in a soothing tone. — "You are among friends — my good neighbour, Mapletoft, is as sincerely in your interests, as myself."

"I doubt that," cried Wettenhall; who in an

instant appeared to be sobered, by a conviction of his indiscretion.

" And why do you doubt it, sir?" asked the vicar. " Do you think I have *reason*, to be otherwise, than your friend?"

" I only meant," answered Wettenhall, " that what I have to say, may tend to lower, in your estimation, — one to whom you have ever been a friend, — and in communicating HIS FALL, I shall put whatever portion of friendship you may have for me to a severe test."

" Good heaven!" exclaimed Mapletoft, forgetting the implied insult, in his awakened apprehension of misfortune, — " what communication have you to make? — Speak — I entreat you. — "

" I cannot find words, sir.— The facts will be thorns to your heart, and I fear to trust myself. — At the hazard of my life I am here — my steps are tracked — "

" You may easily embark from hence, at once," cried Sir Luke. —

" I wished at all hazards — at all risks to see you, my venerated friend," cried the young man, " before — "

" Speak, I entreat you," exclaimed the impa-

tient vicar; "what have you to say? — it is of Pen — it is of—"

"Alas, sir! — he is — "

"What? — say — "

"The murderer of—"

"Of whom? —"

"Of — Major Irwine."

The arms of the vicar fell as if paralyzed, and a groan only escaped, in the torture, of the moment. He closed his eyes, and lay back in his chair, in a state of mental agony.

The baronet, though less interested in the subject, owing to the alienation of his regard which the repeated reports of our hero's delinquency had occasioned, was too much shocked to enquire even the particulars, of the event.

Wettenhall, in a subdued tone of voice, regretted the necessity, of being the bearer of such grievous tidings.

At length, Mapletoft exclaimed, "You, sir, you are not to blame in this, — at least. Good heaven! — all my hopes are now frustrated — weakness — frivolity — imprudence — intemperance, all might have been atoned for; but this, — oh, it is intolerable; what will become of his poor ill-fated uncle?"

The ice being broken, Sir Luke ventured a question, as to the cause and motive of so sanguinary an act.

“ It is to be hoped,” replied Wettenhall, sighing, “ that it arose from some misunderstanding — some fatal error — ”

“ How — how *did* it happen?” cried Mapletoft impatiently.

“ It is a long story, sir, — and I dare not stop to — ”

“ Long or short, sir — life or death, I must have it, before you leave this room,” cried the vicar in a determined tone; and rose from his seat, as if resolved to enforce his demand, should it be disputed.

“ My dear Mapletoft,” cried the baronet in a pacific voice. —

“ Sir,” returned young Wettenhall, “ I am not used to such a peremptory mode, of inquisition.”

“ Used or not used, sir,” retorted the vicar, “ you must bear it now.”

“ Recollect, sir,” said Wettenhall calmly, “ when, upon a former occasion, you thought proper to subject me to interrogatories, against my will, to which I submitted — ”

"And must submit again, and again, young man, or I am much mistaken."

"Indeed, friend Mapletoft," said the baronet interposing; "you are severe; — unjust: — what has Frank done, to warrant this?"

"I have incurred the reverend gentleman's displeasure, by being the unwilling testimony to his friend's delinquency," said Wettenhall with some asperity.

"Sir, sir, you waste time, and evade the question. If I have done you injustice, I shall be the first to atone for it. I am in a state little short of distraction at this moment, and all I demand of you, is the relief of knowing at least the provocation received, in order that I may make up the balance of my account, with the wretched young man, whom you call my friend."

"I would do it willingly; but, indeed," replied Wettenhall, "I am not sufficiently master of the circumstances."

"You know who the Major is," demanded the vicar, with renewed energy. —

"Be composed, my dear friend," cried the baronet, again interposing; "of course he does; it is the poor man, who was called Black Jack."

"Psha, Sir Luke; — pray, pray, leave this

young man to me. — I again ask you, if you know —"

"Do *you*, sir?" exclaimed Wettenhall, with some surprise.

"I DO, SIR; and now let me ask, was his daughter concerned in the question?"

"His daughter, Mapletoft," cried the baronet, smiling; "why, he has neither chick, nor child."

"I entreat you, Sir Luke," said Mapletoft, gently touching his arm; then turning to Wettenhall — "was Miss Irwine connected with this melancholy event?"

"She was, sir; — it was in her arms that —"

"Did Pen know Major Irwine?"

"Of course he did."

"You understand my question, sir; did he know him to be the father of — of Miss Irwine?"

"I cannot say."

"Cannot say! — did you never inform him?"

"Never."

"And why did you not?"

"Indeed, sir, you presume too far upon my patience; am I to be cross-examined, not only on my conduct, — but my motives?"

"If you have nothing to conceal, you can feel no objection. — If you have —"

"What then, sir?" demanded the young man sternly. —

"It will avail you nothing to attempt it. And now, sir, with Sir Luke's permission, I would ask — whether Miss Irwine, be not the young lady, to whom your affections are engaged?"

"What!" exclaimed the baronet; "*he* marry Black Jack's daughter! a proud, upstart nabob, who has never had the civility to return my visit! — he —"

"Those are minor considerations, my dear Sir Luke. I wish an answer to my question."

"Which, however," returned Wettenhall, "I do not feel justified in giving."

"You *must* answer it, sir," retorted Mapletoft, "before you leave this room, — or —"

"Nay," cried the baronet, interrupting him, "it cannot be; — besides, it isn't quite fair to sift young men, on love matters."

"Mine is no idle curiosity, Sir Luke," said the vicar; "it is a question of vital importance to us all; — and which I must have answered."

"Not by me, sir, be assured," observed Wettenhall, with a countenance that bespoke his determination.

"Then, you must abide the consequences. I am master of your conduct, from the moment in which the meeting at Barton Coppice took place — the assignation — "

Wettenhall started on his legs, "Forbear, sir — "

"Answer my question, — and put my forbearance to no longer trial."

"I acknowledge then, that, from the first moment I beheld Ellice Craig, I loved her."

"Who!" exclaimed, Sir Luke; "Ellice Craig! — Why, what the deuce — you're both crazy, I believe; — why isn't she gone off with that runagate Pen; and *you* in love with her!"

"She is — "

"Hush, sir," cried Mapletoft, interrupting Wettenhall. "There is much (turning to the baronet) to be explained to you, sir, — but this is not the time or place. I must have a few words more with this young gentleman."

"Surely, I have said enough; and at the risk of my own liberty."

"No, sir; even *your* liberty, if it be *really*

threatened, is of less importance, than the elucidation of this mysterious affair. Is Major Irwine dead?"

"There were no hopes of his recovery, when I left town."

"And how happened you to be in town, when Sir Luke was led to believe that you were concealed — at an obscure inn, in the neighbourhood, of the coast?"

"I had business — business of the utmost importance." —

"And that business —"

"Was of a private nature."

"Not necessary to be concealed from friends, I should suppose," observed Mapletoft rather contemptuously: "it was of course, connected with the object of your affections."

"I do not say so, sir."

"But I ask, if it was not so, sir; and must be answered, or —"

"It was, sir!"

"And who informed you of this fatal catastrophe?"

"I was witness to it — that is —"

"Enough, sir; — and did not prevent it, any more than the duel, with that Irish peer!"

"I was too late, sir."

"Where did it take place?"

"At — at —"

"Surely, sir; the question is easily answered."

"Yes — it is, — but I shall only incur your further displeasure, your — "

"Fear not, sir; I will do you ample justice, if my suspicions have taken a wrong direction."

"The event took place, then, at a house in the skirts of London, whither, to all appearance, Mr. Owen had conveyed Miss Irwine; — for it was in the moment, that he was discovered at her feet by Major Irwine, that the fatal shot was fired."

"*He*, not knowing — that the Major was her father — and you, sir, being master of the secret, cautiously keeping it from him. — Who then, I demand," cried Mapletoft, starting on his legs — "who is the real murderer, of that good, and exemplary man?"

"He," cried the baronet, who could refrain no longer, "a good and exemplary man! — but poor man, he is probably dead — and there's an end of all ceremony."

"Yes, Sir Luke — the best, the most humane, the most liberal of human kind — butchered by

the policy of this man, who stands before you, and who, by a word, might have saved a precious life; and (sighing deeply) have rescued a soul, from mortal sin."

"This is not to be borne, sir," exclaimed Wettenhall, whose patience seemed now stretched, to its utmost limit.

"It must be borne, young man," retorted the vicar; "and much more, for the burden of iniquity will not be lightened, upon the unrepenting sinner."

"Surely, sir, I might have motives for withholding the knowledge of a fact, without incurring the blame, and penalty of an act, which no human foresight, could have anticipated?"

"Could you not have prevented it?"

"No, on my soul, I could not; I did not arrive on the spot, until the blow was struck."

"And how," cried Mapletoft, turning round upon him, as if inspired with some new suspicion, "how came you to the spot at all?— how happened you to know any thing of the place, — or the assignation, — or whatever it was?" —

"I was distracted at the intelligence of Miss Irwine being carried off; and followed the car-

riage of Major Irwine, which I found at the door of the house."

This answer seemed to confound Mr. Mapletoft. The young man had returned to town for the purpose, perhaps, of inducing Ellice to become the partner of his flight; — and it was natural, that he should join in the pursuit; and that he should track the father's steps. He felt he had been guilty of undue severity, and perhaps injustice — and bursting into tears, acknowledged that he was in the wrong. He even besought young Wettenhall to pardon suspicions, which appeared now, to have no ground, but in his anxiety, to avert the final sentence, against his once beloved Pen Owen.

After he had given way to his feelings for a few moments, he determined to make what reparation was in his power, by joining with Sir Luke, in devising the best, and most secret means, of conveying him out of the reach of pursuit.

The young man gave, however, such satisfactory reasons, for retiring across the country to the neighbourhood of Dover, where were his servant and luggage; and which also was open to a friendly, and private communication with Lon-

don, that it was finally settled, he should lose no time, in setting forward on his journey.

At this moment, the butler entered abruptly, with a countenance of alarm and consternation; but before he could announce his purpose, two men followed him into the room — who going directly up to young Wettenhall, charged him to surrender in the king's name, and, producing a warrant, claimed him as their prisoner, under the name, of Pendarves Owen.

Sir Luke, and Mr. Mapletoft, immediately came forward, in spite of the alarm created by this unforeseen intrusion; and assured the officer, that he was mistaken in the person, for that this gentleman's name, was Wettenhall.

" And a very good name it is," observed the officer — " and we have *him* already secured on a warrant, sent down last week, to Warwickshire. — You knew such an one, young gentleman, I dare swear — Wettenhall — a little affair of high treason, which will be soon settled. — Yours, I believe, doesn't go quite so far."

" His father!" whispered the baronet to Mapletoft, with a countenance, which was quite sufficient to satisfy the officer, that he had got possession of the right man.

Young Wettenhall, who soon recovered his presence of mind, which had naturally been suspended during the first surprise of his arrest, observed to the officer, that "he must recollect he acted at his peril—for that here, in the house of one of the first men in the country, and a magistrate, he was solemnly assured, that he was not the person, named in the warrant—and, moreover,—that the person so named, was known to them."

"I am ready to act," said the messenger; "and be it on my own responsibility.—Mr. Pen Owen is pretty well known upon town, for several of his vagaries; and it was only on Thursday last, before the privy council, that he acknowledged he had taken different names.

"This is true," observed Wettenhall;—"having been engaged in an affair of honour, he was compelled to assume a disguise, and to take a borrowed name."

"Which he continued, *rather longer*, than was necessary," replied the officer; "since Lord Killcullane, as he must have known, was too slightly wounded, to have occasioned a moment's anxiety."

"Lord Killcullane!" exclaimed Mapletoft; "what! — is he recovered?"

"Recovered! — why bless you, sir, it was only a flesh-wound, and a few ounces of blood."

"But *that*, Mr. Owen was not aware of," — cried Wettenhall briskly.

"And were *you*, sir?" demanded Mapletoft of Wettenhall, with a returning look of suspicion.

"Not till this moment," answered he without hesitation; — but turning to the king's messenger, (for such he was,) "you are incurring a very serious responsibility, in detaining me as your prisoner."

"Not much, sir; — it seems, at least, you are pretty well acquainted with the history of Mr. Pen Owen, and I can't be very far wide of my mark."

"Surely," returned Wettenhall, "you are not to be told, that your inferences have nothing to do with the question; — your warrant is specifically, against an individual — and that individual, I solemnly assure you, I am not."

"Perhaps not, sir, — and yet my information

is pretty accurate. I was directed to follow my man, to a certain house at Islington; — I did so — and was just in time to see *you* enter it; — a woman who was sitting in a carriage at the door, called out to you, by name — and you held up your finger with a menacing gesture, to silence her. — I demanded of her, if you were really Mr. Pen Owen, and she, not suspecting my purpose, answered boldly in the affirmative.

"I rushed to the door of the house, which you suddenly closed upon me, and after some delay it was opened by a Bow-street officer, with whom I had some acquaintance. Whilst I was enquiring of him the cause of the disturbance up stairs; I saw you again, sir, rush down — and leaping a window, which opened upon the leads of some outhouses, your activity soon distanced me in any efforts to follow you; so that I had to return, and proceed a considerable way about, with my followers, in the hope of intercepting your flight. By this means you secured your retreat. It was necessary, therefore, to follow up the scent before it should cool. I despatched my companion for this purpose, and returned to the house to obtain the further aid, of one of the official runners; when

I learnt, that a gentleman had been killed by Mr. Pen Owen, the lover of his daughter. I could have no doubt, therefore, as to your identity — and having traced you to the Borough, we found your lair, where you had been for twelve hours still warm, and followed on the track, which lay too strong to throw us out. — You had only forty minutes' start of us.

"My chum here, was charged with a warrant, backed within this half hour, by a county magistrate, against this same Pen Owen, alias Brown, alias Wettenhall, if you will have it so, on a charge of murder; — and thus, sir, you see, my peril is but slight, — even if I should be wrong, in one of my *aliases*."

Against the authority of a man so determined, and so apparently justified in enforcing it, Sir Luke, even as a magistrate, could not presume to act. He, however, remonstrated, and, stating the circumstances of the case, — again repeated all the arguments, the occasion supplied, against the detention of a gentleman, under the roof of his protector and friend, who certainly could not be identified with the criminal, named in the warrant.

The messenger was civil and respectful; but it would have been as easy to move the neigh-

bouring masses of St. Vincent's rocks, as the determination of that resolved, and conscientious executor of the laws.

Mr. Wettenhall was, therefore, compelled to acquiesce; and having taken a melancholy leave of Sir Luke, and the Vicar, he entered the carriage waiting at the door, to convey him with his agreeable companions in a post chaise,—to London.

CHAPTER IX.

It is necessary now to return to Major Irwine, who, upon leaving the vicarage, after his important and interesting disclosure, set off immediately for town. He found a note awaiting him from young Wettenhall, requesting an *immediate interview*, at a certain coffee-house; the Major not yet being sufficiently satisfied, upon certain points of his character, to warrant an appointment at his own house.

He was induced to think more favourably of him, on account of his friendly conduct to Pen Owen, whose insulting demeanour towards him he had himself witnessed. There was, too, an air of sincerity, in the manner of this young man, when he repelled with indignation the implied suspicion of meaning any thing, but what was honourable, had he succeeded in carrying off his daughter, that convinced the Major, he was entitled to a more favourable

verdict than he, perhaps, had too hastily pronounced against him.

He repaired immediately to the place of assignation, and soon after Wettenhall, who had been there repeatedly during the day, made his appearance. He seemed to be much agitated; and related to the Major the event of the duel, and the steps he had taken, for the security of his rash principal. He spoke lightly of the danger he himself incurred, but said he was prepared to take such precautions, as might be deemed necessary. He added, that it would be advisable for Pen to leave the country; to which the Major readily assented, feeling that the further he was removed, the less chance there would be of his interfering with the happiness of his daughter.

Not so, thought she, when informed of this new instance of the ungovernable impetuosity, and violence of his character.

" Surely, my beloved father," she said, " he now views things through some distorted medium. — His disappointments, and the anger of his family, have bewildered him. — Oh! I have known him from the moment I have known

any thing, and he was always the gentlest — the kindest — the most benevolent of human beings."

"Nay, but, my loved child — you admit that he was at times, unmanageable — and ——"

"Only from the buoyancy of his spirits — a word — a look of rebuke, would quell him in an instant."

"You are a subtle pleader, Ellice. — I dare not trust you with the cause. — Oh, my darling! — restored image of thy mother, — let me not seem to stand in the way of thy happiness. I will sacrifice my life readily — cheerfully to secure it."

"What! — when I am only now blest by the presence of a parent — pledge yourself to tear him from me, to make me happy!" cried the playful girl, smiling through her tears.

"My child — my child! — I am tortured with the idea of this young man, — on whom you depend, I too much fear, for your future happiness, — what, what is to be said for him?"

"I can say nothing, my kindest of parents, and will say nothing; — he shall speak for *himself* — that you know is the spirit of our laws — and all women are friends to liberty."

"Thou saucy girl; — but how shall we make him speak — how can he possibly defend himself? — here are facts — stubborn facts."—

"I will be serious, my dear sir; —and though I blush not to repeat that which I could not conceal from you, if I would, —believe me, I will never bestow my hand without your consent."

"My consent! I can refuse you nothing; — there, now, — you know your power."

"And that knowledge robs me of it; — and yet, my too kind parent, believe me, I would not, even if your consent were yielded to my wishes, give my hand to a man, whom I could not esteem — aye, and honour too! — That I love Pen, I will not deny — that the earliest wish of my heart, was to devote it exclusively to him, I admit; — but I would sooner that heart should break, —than yield where duty forbade it."

"Child, child, — don't talk of heart-breaking, unless you would break mine."

"No, my dearest father, fear not; — I know *that* of my Pen Owen so thoroughly; — am so convinced of his integrity, — his honour, — his principles, — that I feel assured, when the clouds disperse, in which he appears to be in-

volved at this moment, he will stand clear, and pure in your eyes — and leave my heart to be — any thing but broken."

"Do you recollect Rose Weston?"

"On my life," cried Ellice, with an energy that astonished her father, — "he is innocent! Oh, that my happiness depended, singly, on that contingency."

"It shall, by heaven, my child, — my angel child; — if my suspicions, which, alas! are not slightly taken up, — if they are unfounded, I will trust to your knowledge of the boy's character; — and if you do not mould him to virtue, he must be — the devil himself."

"I am content," cried the blushing, laughing girl, as she flew into the embrace of her father; "and you, my beloved parent, shall be contented too."

The conversation now turned upon the situation of poor Rose Weston, who was no other than niece to his own confidential servant. — Both the Major and his daughter, had taken a deep and tender interest in her melancholy story.

Henry Morton, who was the brother of the good-hearted woman we have seen displaying

so much benevolence towards our hero in his distresses, had been wild in his youth, and, having dissipated a small patrimony, was reduced to the necessity of entering the army, as a common soldier. His short career in arms terminated in fixing him with Major Irwine; and, on his return to England, his first object was, to enquire after his widowed sister, and her child. The secret of her misfortune was, for some time, concealed from him; and not having seen his niece for several years, he attributed whatever he perceived of melancholy in her manner, to the habitual tone and character of her mind.

It was not for some time after their flight from the country, that Morton discovered the place of their retreat; and even then, no persuasion could induce either mother or daughter to give up the name of the person who had broken in upon the peace and honour of his family.

Major Irwine was soon informed of the circumstances; and, from his attachment to the uncle, was induced not only to visit, but to promise every aid and influence in his power, to obtain justice for the injured parties.—

When he visited this house of sorrow, his interest was more immediately and deeply engaged in the cause, — and he thought it no degradation to his daughter, to share with him the task of consoling the afflicted, and pouring balm into the wounds of adversity.

She had several times induced poor Rose Weston, — whose constitution was visibly sinking under the combined influence of disappointment, confinement, and the impure atmosphere, to which she was unaccustomed, — to accompany her in the carriage, for the sake of air and exercise, — and it was in returning from one of these excursions, that Ellice Craig had witnessed the scene, in which poor Pen appeared to so little advantage, as the hero of a London mob!

The Major would have removed the mother and daughter to his own house; but this they resisted with a firmness, that convinced him there was an influence stronger than his own predominating over the fortunes of these unhappy people. He easily drew from them a confession, that they were forbidden to leave their present abode, and that their only hope rested on implicit obedience to the commands of the un-

known seducer. — Nothing, however, — intreaties, — remonstrances, — even threats, could shake the resolution of Mrs. Weston, and her daughter, or induce them to give up the name of the object, so dreaded — and yet so loved.

From certain circumstances, which Morton had picked up, in his repeated conversations with his sister, and which he subsequently connected with the simultaneous departure of Pen Owen from Oldysleigh, with that of herself and her daughter from their home, — only a few miles distant, — he entertained strong suspicions, that our hero was the guilty person. These were communicated to the Major, who followed up the circumstances in his own mind, until he was almost morally certain of their justice. From some further information which he had gathered, in a few minutes' private conversation with Mr. Mapletoft, on his late visit to the country, his few doubts upon the subject were dissipated; and the next morning, he determined to probe Mrs. Weston, and to ascertain a point in which the happiness of so many persons, dear to him, was thus seriously implicated.

He would not wound the feelings of his daughter, by communicating the whole extent

of his own information; and when she so confidently expressed the contrary conviction of Pen's innocence, — he trembled to think of the thunderbolt impending over her.

On the following morning, according to his previous resolution, he proceeded to Mrs. Weston's lodgings, near Smithfield, and having expostulated with her for some time, he became offended at her pertinacity, in witholding the desired information, and assured her that, being fully acquainted with the name and person of her daughter's seducer, he would take measures to obtain justice for her, in spite of herself.

A scene ensued, in which the anger of the Major was, in spite of his better judgment, much softened; but hearing a voice in the adjoining room, which he could not, for a moment, doubt was that of Pen Owen, he rose indignantly from his seat, — and now convinced, not only of the fact, but impressed also with suspicions, that tended to degrade both the mother, and the child, — denounced vengeance against them, if any further concealment was practised. The anxiety of the poor woman, that he should lower his voice,—in which her fear even of his displeasure seemed to be lost, — robbed him of

the last hope; and he would have forced himself into the adjoining room, had she not, on her knees, entreated his forbearance, — and, in an unguarded moment, solemnly pledged herself to make an unreserved communication to the Major, on the following day.

Part of this concluding conversation we, as well as our hero, were permitted to overhear, and whatever may have been the sentiments of the reader upon the occasion, we know, that it excited no less indignation, on the part of Pen Owen, than of the gentleman on the other side of the partition, and had nearly brought him forth, from his hiding place, — to anticipate the discovery of the Major.

When the latter descended into the court, in which Mrs. Weston's lodgings were situated, he paused, and walked, more than once, up and down the flag-stones, doubting whether he should not wait in the neighbourhood, till Pen thought proper to make his appearance. Dismissing the plan from his mind, however, as derogating from his own dignity, he passed to the outlet of the court, into the street upon which it opened, when, — to his no small surprise, he encountered Frank Wettenhall, who did not

perceive the Major, 'till they were face to face. They both started, — and, I believe, it would be difficult to say, which of them evinced, or really felt the greater degree of astonishment.

"Have you any acquaintance in this neighbourhood?" asked the Major, with an air affecting as much of pleasantry as the real agitation of his mind would admit.

"Have *you?*" retorted Wettenhall with a smile, that showed he had perfectly recovered from the effect of the sudden surprise.

"Why — yes," returned the Major, "I certainly have; but it cannot be an acquaintance of yours."

"If you mean in this immediate vicinity — certainly not — but I am in search of Mr. Pen Owen, whose retreat is in this part of the world."

"It is," said the Major, in vain endeavouring to suppress his indignation; — "and you have not far to go, to find him. — There, sir, — there sir," turning to point at the lodging, — "there you will find the gentleman."

"Impossible," exclaimed Wettenhall, in a determined tone, that might have staggered the Major himself, had not the question been put

beyond all doubt, by the sudden apparition of the identical Pen Owen, — who, with an air of perfect indifference, — apparently quite at home, and in his shirt sleeves, — was airing himself at the very window towards which the immoveable finger of the Major pointed.

" By ——," exclaimed he, " this is beyond belief;" — then raising his voice, uttered the menace, which, on reaching the ears of our hero, inspired him with, at least, as sincere a disposition for vengeance as that by which it had been provoked.

Wettenhall, foreseeing the consequences of a meeting, under such circumstances, contrived to hurry the Major from the field, and to offer such opinions, as he thought most likely to soothe the irritation of his companion, as he led him back to the west end of the town.

Such evidence, as the Major was now able to produce against our unfortunate hero, he thought of too clear and substantive a nature, to warrant his withholding it from his daughter — She certainly was staggered, — but not convinced. The facts were strong, and inexplicable; but still she hesitated. — Allowing that he had been guilty, — had been led away by the violence

of his passions, — still, still she could not be brought to believe, that he could be so altered, — so totally the reverse of what he had ever been, — as to sin without remorse, much less, that he could be so lost as to revel in iniquity, and glory in dishonour. — She nevertheless assured her father, that if these facts could be substantiated, — she was ignorant of her own heart, if it were not capable of submitting to sacrifice an object, every way so unworthy of its homage, — without a murmur.

"But," cried the Major, who was as angry, as it was possible for him to be with her, "why will you cherish hope, in the face of facts incontrovertible, — open to the face of day, — seen by these eyes?" She threw herself into his arms, and hiding her face, in his paternal bosom, whispered, —

"I have pledged myself, my father, to do my duty, — and I will do it, — though my heart break in the conflict!"

The Major was compelled to be satisfied, and would have been so, could he have read her heart. — It was so pure, so gentle, that it was incapable of retaining any thing which could breathe a taint upon it. — She would not, —

could not reject the friend, who had shared its impulses from the cradle, until she felt assured, that his whole nature had been perverted,—and this she could not believe, upon any evidence, short of ocular demonstration, which, however, she could not but acknowledge, was pretty nearly the case at present.

The Major urged the question no more; but informed her of the measures he proposed to take, and the final resolution he had adopted, with respect to the poor sufferers. He would wait upon Mrs. Weston the next morning,—when he would force her to redeem her pledge, of making a full, and unreserved communication of all the events, by which she had been reduced to her present situation,—that he would exert himself in her cause, and, if possible, see justice done to her and to her child; but that the first, and only condition on his part, should be, the abandonment of the protection to which they had thus disgracefully submitted,—and without any communication whatever with Mr. Owen.

"Or, whoever else he may be," said Ellice, smiling.

"Alas! alas! my child; but, no matter— they shall return with me to this house, and

here have an asylum until something more effectual can be done. If there is law in the land, that can reach the destroyer of domestic peace and innocence, my fortune shall be drained to secure it."

"Will you," he continued, after a short pause, "accompany me in the carriage? I do not wish you to enter a place—"

"Make your own arrangements, my dear father, as you think best and most likely to effect your benèvolent purpose.—I can accompany you, and either wait in the carriage, or add my persuasions to yours, if necessary."

The plan was arranged.—In the morning the carriage conveyed them to the corner of the street, which led to the court, and there remained, that the attention of passengers might not be attracted by such a phenomenon, as a smart equipage at the opening of an obscure alley, whose inhabitants were all of the lower, if not the lowest, orders of society.—Having left his daughter in this situation, under the care of his servants, he proceeded, with Morton, to Mrs. Weston's lodgings.

Upon entering the room, he perceived that his arrival was unexpected, or at least, not expected so soon.—There was an evident confusion in

the countenance and manner of Mrs. Weston; and he had not been long seated, before he distinctly heard the door of the interior apartment gently opened, and a person steal down,— whose footing, the creaking of the old staircase betrayed at every step.

Mrs. Weston seemed to be more composed, although she evidently observed, that the attention of her visitor had been drawn to the circumstance. The poor Rose was in tears, and silently pursued her own thoughts. At length, the Major opened the purpose of his visit; he declared himself disposed and ready to afford any, and every assistance in his power to see justice done to the oppressed widow and her daughter; but that what he had witnessed the day preceding, and what he had just now unavoidably heard, tended to convince him, that the first error was only likely to be the precursor of others. He added, "however anxious — and deeply anxious I feel,—to bring back peace and happiness to your bosoms, I cannot be a tacit spectator of improprieties which —"

"Improprieties! — indeed, indeed, my good and gracious benefactor," exclaimed Mrs. Weston, interrupting him, "you are deceived

in us. We have been grievously to blame; but it was ONE error, and our guilt was too great credulity;—we have done nothing since, that can bear even a misconstruction."

"Madam! madam!" cried the impatient Major, breaking in upon her in his turn, "am I—or am I not, to believe the evidence of my own senses; did I not hear—did I not see a young man,—half-dressed,—evidently with the air of an inmate,—and on the most familiar footing, lounging out of this very window, a few minutes after I had left your house, yesterday?"

"I do not—cannot deny it; and yet it is a mistake—imprudent, incautious young man!" sighed the poor woman, half-aside.

"That was Mr. Brown," said Rose, who was roused by the energy of the Major's manner.

"So be it, Miss Weston; call him by what name you please—I know him."

"He said—he admitted that he knew you," observed Mrs. Weston.

"I doubt it not—but, madam, this is trifling; I had almost said evasive—you stand pledged, to reveal to me the whole of the story, which you have hitherto weakly withheld from the knowledge of your brother and myself. I

come to offer you protection! justice! independence! — but you must fulfil your part of the covenant; for I cannot perform even my duty — by halves. — I will not — must not act in the dark."

"How am I racked! — if — if, my dear sir, you had been half an hour later—"

"Your friend, in the next room," cried the Major, interrupting her, — "would have fabricated a story for you!"

"Major Irwine," said the offended, but agitated woman, "I know not what it is, to be guilty of a falsehood!"

"Why, then, hesitate to avow the truth; can a prompter be necessary — or is it possible, you can be so weak, as to rely upon a base wretch — a —"

"Who! who!" asked the poor girl, with vehemence, turning round in her chair.

"No one, my child; our kind friend, the Major, is only supposing —"

"If my supposition is false," continued the Major, — whom, even the looks of the distressed girl could not arrest, in the pursuit of what he now considered an imperative duty, — "it is easy to set me right. Mystery is the companion of

guilt; if there be nothing wrong,—concealment is unnecessary—if—"

"Indeed, indeed, sir," answered Mrs. Weston, "to-morrow, or perhaps this afternoon, I may be permitted to disclose every thing."

"To-morrow!—no, madam, this instant, or we part,—to meet no more."

"Consider, for Heaven's sake, sister," said Morton, now coming forward, "what dangers you are encountering. The Major is your friend—the scoundrel, who—"

"Nay, Harry Morton, do not *you* use such terms."

"What others can he use," cried the Major, "to a man, whom we know to be the slave of his own passions; and who cares not what victims, he immolates to them!"

"Indeed, Major Irwine, you know him not."

"Woman!—I know him better than you do."

"He is a stranger to you! indeed—indeed, he is!"

"Do you equivocate?—did you not even now own, that at least, he knew *me?*"

"Oh, no! — no" — answered Mrs. Weston.

"Morton!" cried the Major, provoked at the apparent evasion — "did she not?"

"Most assuredly, sir," answered he; "and I am ashamed, that a being, whom I have so long esteemed and considered only unfortunate, should so far forget herself, as to stand in the gap between my honoured master, and a wretch, who, least of all, merits mercy at her hands!"

"I repeat, Harry Morton," cried the woman, bursting into tears, "you are misinformed."

"Misinformed!" cried the now powerfully excited Major; "not know — Pen Owen and his cursed acts—his unblushing atrocity — in courting one woman, whilst he —"

"He's betrayed!" screamed Rose Weston, and fell back in her chair, in strong convulsions.

The mother ran to her aid, not, however, before she had admitted the truth of the Major's suspicions, by an exclamation, as unequivocal as that of her daughter.

The conversation was suspended, whilst each one of the party was anxiously interested, and devoted to the recovery of the poor girl. At length, her recollection returned in some degree, and starting from her chair, she pushed aside

those who surrounded her, and rushed towards the door of communication, between the two rooms. — "Come, come, poor Pen, they have found you out; but heed them not — we will suffer together; there is nothing now to conceal — and we shall be blest, — though in a desert!"

The weeping mother wrung her hands, and gently drew her daughter back; telling her he was gone.

"Gone!" exclaimed Rose, "whither! — gone, and without me! — he promised — but, oh! oh!" bursting into an agony of tears, "you have betrayed him, mother; and then — then, he threatened, — never, — never to return!"

"Villain!" muttered the Major, turning to his servant; — "what has he not to answer for!"

"I knew it, sir; I was convinced, I could not be mistaken," said Morton, in a whisper to his master.

"Oh, save him! — save my child!" cried Mrs. Weston; "do not harm him, Major; he will be all that we can wish him, if — if—"

"If!" cried Major Irwine, interrupting her, "if we suffer him to escape — no, madam: I will see justice done to you, and to this injured angel!"

"No! no!" cried the imploring girl, who had caught part of the sentence; "no justice!—no justice!—Pen is a man of honour; I know him;—indeed, he has declared it."—

"Peace, my dear child," said the mother; "we will do the best; our kind, our benevolent friends have guessed the secret; *we* have not betrayed it, and they will see—"

"Yes," rejoined the Major; "I *will* see to every thing;—in the meantime, you, madam, and your daughter, must go with me. Miss Irwine is waiting in the carriage for you; and you must not be left open to the machinations of this man,—whom I know better than you do."

"Heavens! can it be!" sighed the poor woman, turning up her eyes, as if suddenly inspired with the conviction of a truth, she had endeavoured to exclude.

"Go, Morton," said the Major; "bring the carriage to the gateway, there can be no need of much preparation; your brother, madam, can remain behind, and will settle every thing that remains for you to do."

Morton went as he was desired, and Mrs. Weston, unable or unwilling, longer to contend with her positive benefactor, prepared to obey

his orders; but when she would have put a little straw bonnet upon her daughter's head, the unfortunate girl pushed it away, screaming —

" I am not! — indeed, mamma, I am not mad! do not believe them; do not part with me. Cruel! cruel! Why should they take me away! — Pen will be here; and when I am gone, he will say, I have deserted him! — indeed! — indeed! I will behave quite well! I am not mad!" and seating herself in her chair, she assumed an air of studied calmness, and a smile—that spoke a world of woe within. It penetrated to the heart of the Major, who silently ejaculated, " Heaven! can thy judgments fail to fall upon the perpetrator of this ruin?"

Rapid steps were at this moment heard ascending the stairs, and Morton, pale and almost breathless, rushed into the room.

" Has Miss Irwine been here!" demanded he, in a voice scarcely articulate.

" Here!" exclaimed the Major, catching at his arm, to prevent himself from falling.—" What do you mean?"

" She — she is gone!"

"Preserve my senses, Heaven!" exclaimed the Major, rushing after his servant, who was already half down the stairs. They ran to the carriage, which remained where he had left it, but it was empty. The servants informed him, that a few minutes after his departure, a note had been brought by a decent looking young woman for Miss Irwine, who immediately ordered the step to be let down, and telling the footman he need not follow, as her father wished her to go to him unaccompanied, — walked off, and turning the corner of the street, was out of sight in an instant.

The feelings of the Major may be easily imagined. He sank upon the step of the carriage, holding his hand to his head, as if to prevent despair, — and collect his bewildered thoughts, into some order, for prompt action.

Morton perceived an open note, on the seat.— He gave it to his master; — it was apparently, in a female hand, written in pencil, and purporting to come from Mrs. Weston, simply desiring Miss Irwine, in her father's name, to hasten immediately, to her lodgings, as he required her assistance, — she was expressly

desired not to bring a servant with her, in order to preclude observation.

The Major saw a depth of design in this, which prompt presence of mind only, could counteract. He started on his feet, took Morton's arm, and desiring the carriage to follow, turned the corner, and enquiring at the several shops, if they had seen a young lady, under such and such circumstances, soon collected pretty nearly the whole, that was to be learned.

A man, however, who had the appearance of a mere idler, sauntering about, and looking in at the several windows, now came up to the Major, and told him, that if he was enquiring after the young lady, who had been carried off,—he could, perhaps, afford him a clew to her recovery.—He added, that he should have interfered in the affair, if they, who carried her off, had not assured him, she was a run-away wife.

He was one of the peace officers, left on the watch, to secure any other of the reformers, who might be found lurking in the neighbourhood, and on this account, had particularly noted every thing that had occurred.—He informed the trembling father, that a notorious

radical, who had been guilty of murder, — for whom they had been some time on their look out, — had made a violent assault upon one of the men who had seized the young lady, which confirmed him in the opinion, that their story was true, as he naturally inferred, that such a person was not likely to be employed on the side of justice. — He added, that probably, the man would have rescued her, had he not himself been apprehended at the moment, by the police officers.

The runner further informed the Major, —as his colleagues had previously told Pen, — that they always took the number of a coach, when any thing extraordinary was going forward; and that he doubted not, in a very few hours, if the gentleman would drive to Bow-street, and there wait for him, he should be able to trace the fare. — The Major would have preferred any plan, in which his body could have been as actively employed as his feelings, — nevertheless he saw, that this was the surest, and probably the most prompt mode, of arriving at his object, and therefore ordered his carriage, to the place of appointment.

He remained at the public office for some

hours, until his patience was nearly exhausted, when the runner returned, and told him, he had traced the coach to a certain point, and that if he would suffer him to mount the box of his carriage, he thought the enquiry might thus be more readily, and quickly followed up. As the Major was re-entering his chariot, the runner appeared to take his last information, from a man who had entered the office with him.

"Again," said he, — "number 935?"

"Number 935, — drawn off the Whitehall stand, at 18 minutes past 3, — seen by Ned Tip, turning from Tottenham Court, on the Islington beat, — at a quarter before four."

"Why!" exclaimed the Major, who overheard this communication, "it is only now, a quarter past four."

"The scent lies hot, your honour!" cried the man mounting the box, — but as his foot was on the wheel, seeming to recollect something, he called to his colleague, "Joe, — did Griper know the fare's name?"

"'Twas one Owen, who turns up to have shot a Lord."

"Villain!" exclaimed the Major.

"Drive on!" cried the officer, and a very

smart trot, soon brought them to the Islington road, — where one or two short questions, without stopping the vehicle, — to a passing hackney coachman, — and to a sauntering individual, who returned the watch-word like lightning, — sufficed to direct them towards the object of their search, at the end of a bye street, — where, in a few seconds, they found themselves abreast of the important hackney coach.

The Major dashed out, and unfortunately for him, ran up stairs, with Morton only, leaving his conductor to watch below, — who had he been of the party, and finding a comrade at the door of the chamber, would soon have come to an explanation, and prevented the grievous consequences which followed. The resistance he met with, only sharpened his determination to force his way, and the defiance hurled at him, in the known voice of the now abhorred Pen Owen, drove him frantically on, — till bursting open the door, — he received the contents of the rash young man's pistol in his body, and precipitated the catastrophe — we have before related.

CHAPTER X.

The state of Pen Owen's mind, when he found from the exclamation of his beloved Ellice, that he had raised his hand against the life of her father, — may be more easily conceived, than described.

In the first ebullition of contending feelings, he had seized the second pistol, and would probably, — in the momentary loss of reason, — have directed it against his own head, had not a movement of the Major inspired him with the sudden hope, that his life might yet be saved. — Rushing down the stairs, he ran in search of medical assistance, and was so fortunate, as to find an apothecary in the adjoining street, with whom he flew back to the fatal apartment. — On his return, he found Ellice recovered from her swoon, and supporting her father on the bed, where he had been lifted with the assistance of the officer, whom Pen had ordered into the room, in the moment of leaving it.

The dishevelled hair and frantic appearance of our hero, dragging in the apothecary, aroused the attention of both father and daughter, who gazed alternately on him, and each other, as he aided the attendant, to discover and examine into the nature of the wound.—The Major, however, raising his right arm, observed, "that it was not likely to affect the patient so much, as it appeared to do the person, who had inflicted it."

Pen heard no more,—throwing himself on his knees beside the bed,—he grasped the hand of Ellice, and of her father, and screaming out, "God be praised!" burst into an hysterical laugh,—and fell senseless on the floor.

The doctor remonstrated; but he forgot, that the best arguments are unavailing, when addressed to those, who either cannot, or will not hear;—so having discovered, that the ball had merely grazed the Major's arm, and that his fall had been occasioned, more by his own precipitancy, and the shock he experienced on discovering, as he supposed, all his suspicions confirmed,—than by the wound,—he very deliberately began to place our hero in a situation, where,—without any reference to the Lex

Talionis, of which, probably, he had never heard, —he proceeded to the execution of it, in a copious shedding of, "blood, for blood."

Ellice had quickly undeceived her father respecting the situation in which she had been found with Pen, and the Major was disposed to believe much in favour of a man, who had rescued his daughter from destruction, and whose feelings, however they might have led him astray on other occasions, were here excited in a manner, which could not be reprobated by him. When, however, he saw his child, hanging over the insensible form of our hero, weeping and wringing her hands, in a state little differing from his own, the recollection of his guilt with the unfortunate Rose Weston, burst upon his mind, and disregarding his own wound, he started from the bed, and taking his daughter in his sound arm, gently drew her towards him. — He entreated her to be comforted, and then whispered "discretion," — where the exposure of her feelings might involve her with a man, unworthy to excite them.

"He is innocent, on my soul!" she exclaimed, —and then, as if thoroughly satisfied on that point, she turned upon her father,

and loudly reproached herself, for having risked his safety, by bringing him from the bed, on which the doctor had desired him to repose.

Pen Owen began to exhibit symptoms of recovery; but the revulsion was so overpowering, that the apothecary declared his life to be in danger, if he was not immediately put to bed, and every precaution taken, to secure him from any additional cause of agitation.

Mrs. Weston, having resigned her daughter to the care of a neighbour, had followed the Major when he left her house, and although his activity had eluded her first researches, she at length traced his carriage to Islington; but being unwilling to intrude herself, unless her services should be required, she had taken her seat in the carriage she found at the door, to await the event. When, however, she had learned imperfectly from the door-keepers, what was passing above stairs, she flew to the aid of her benefactors, and hurrying into the room,—beheld a scene, sufficiently terrific, to awaken every feeling, and inspire her with horror.

The Major lay on the bed, the clothes of which were profusely stained with blood,—his daughter

holding one of his hands, whilst she watched with the keenest apprehension, the still languid form of her lover, who, — supported on two chairs, pale and bloody, seemed scarcely to breathe, or to be conscious of what was passing around him.—His eyes half open, wandered from object to object, as if incapable of fixing upon any one, and labouring to identify something, with the vague recollections, which confounded him.

Mrs. Weston caught the last words of the apothecary, and, in a moment, collected sufficient to induce her immediate and active co-operation. She had observed another bed room as she passed up the stairs, and thither she insisted upon our hero being carried; — she instituted herself his nurse, and with that activity which generally accompanies true benevolence, she arranged, and settled every thing in a few minutes, —nor was Ellice to be deterred, by any mistaken sense of propriety, or even by the looks of her father, from contributing to the means, of restoring her unfortunate playmate, — if not her lover, — to himself.

The motion, occasioned by the operation of lifting him from the chair, seemed for a moment to rouse him, and at the same time, catching a

glimpse of the strong interest, expressed in the countenance of Mrs. Weston, — who hung over him, watching his looks, — he made an effort to squeeze her hand, and half murmured a request to "forgive him, for still being a burthen to her kindness!"

"There," exclaimed the Major, — calling peremptorily upon his daughter, to leave the invalid. "Come hither, my child; — I insist. — Will not his own confession satisfy you? —"

"He has confessed nothing," whispered Ellice, approaching her father.

"Does he not acknowledge —"

"Hush, sir!" cried Mrs. Weston, turning to the Major, who was raising his voice, "we must not flurry him!"

"Woman!" exclaimed the Major, upon whose mind was reflected back the more vividly from the intervening interest which had absorbed it, the occurrences at her lodgings: "Woman! what have you to do with a wretch —"

"My father!" — cried Ellice, placing her hand upon his arm.

"Whatever may be his faults, Major Irwine," replied Mrs. Weston, "his virtues — are sacred to me!"

"His virtues! you drive me mad — what! a —"

Before he could finish the invective, our hero was conveyed from his presence, followed by his kind attendant, who gently shut the door, to prevent the remainder of the sentence from being heard.

It was not finished, — for perceiving the agitation of his weeping daughter, who sat at his bed-side, he forebore, in pity, to aggravate the crimes of a being, so fatally endeared to his beloved child. Still, his duty led him to believe, that this was the moment in which his appeal was to be made to her delicacy; and that, however painful or agonizing the struggle, she must be urged to preserve her dignity, and purity, at the risk even of happiness.

"My child! my child! — why, — since it was the will of Providence I should discover you — discover you too, — all that the fondest and most anxious father could wish, or fancy, — why was I doomed to find you thus entangled, in a hopeless attachment. He is, with many, many virtues, — unworthy my Ellice. Can she take to her arms the seducer of innocence, and confirm his more than savage barbarity, by depriving

him of the only means now in his power, of healing the wound he has inflicted! — of making reparation to the broken-hearted Rose!"

"Never! — by the mercy of Heaven, I swear!" cried the trembling girl; "never shall you, my dearest father, have to reproach your child, with such a crime; but —"

"But what, my beloved! — can you still doubt, after the mother's — the girl's — his own confession. — After all I have related to you — the evidence of my own eyes and ears; — the testimony of even strangers? —"

"Still, my father! — still let me enjoy the illusion, — if it be one — suggested by my doubts; — by my knowledge of his native worth, which cannot — cannot have undergone such a revolution, in so short a period!"

"Alas, alas! what have you to feed this illusion? did you not hear his avowal, — implied at least — in what he whispered to that infatuated woman."

"To ME, my best of fathers, he disclaimed all love for Rose Weston — and was proceeding — yes, I recollect now, — he swore he loved her not — when — when you — horrible! horrible! received the ——. I cannot bear the reflection of what might have been the consequences! —"

Here, her tears and agitation checked further utterance, and she fell on the pillow beside her father, almost bereft of sense.

Mrs. Weston entered the room at this moment, and seeing her situation, flew to her assistance. She was soon restored, and eagerly asked after Pen Owen.

"We had better not speak of him now, my dear Miss Irwine," she replied, — looking anxiously towards the Major.

"You are quite right, Mrs. Weston," observed the Major. — "I am glad to hail the symptom of returning reason."

"But how is he?" cried the still persevering and anxious Ellice.

"Well, — I believe!" answered Mrs. Weston.

"Well! — is he so soon recovered?"

"Recovered! — has he been ill?"

"My good Mrs. Weston," exclaimed the Major, — benevolently looking upon her, and raising himself on the bed; — "for God's sake take care of yourself; you are over-taxing your bodily strength, and —"

"No! no! my worthy benefactor; when the mind is active, the body will support it even —"

"True! — but I fear the mind is —"

"Why!" cried Ellice, again interrupting the conversation; "why do you conceal the state of your suffering patient — is he — is he — oh, speak! is he worse; or what does this ambiguity mean?"

"No! indeed, sweet lady, be composed; — he is recovering fast; and I came to tell you, that he now recollects all that has passed, — and is anxious to be admitted to see the Major, and yourself."

"Present my compliments," said the Major, gravely, "to Mr. Pen Owen, — and tell him, when he is ready to atone to you, and your injured daughter, for the crimes of which he has been guilty towards you, — my daughter and myself will bid him welcome; then —"

"Nay, sir! I would not wish you to see him; I would not see him myself — till — till — he prove himself to be, what he has professed."

"Then why be the messenger of such a request; why —"

"I! I never should have presumed to name him to you, — had you not —"

"Detected him! — Mrs. Weston!"

"Be it so, my good sir! — I was bound, not to betray him."

"See you now, Ellice," cried the Major, with tears in his own eyes; — "see you *now*, the truth."

Without replying, but with a deep-drawn sigh, his daughter turned to Mrs. Weston, and asked, in a faultering voice, "Why, then, she had delivered his message?"

"A message from Mr. Pen Owen!" exclaimed Mrs. Weston, with an air of surprise.

"Did you not," demanded the Major, "within these two minutes, say, — that he desired to be admitted to the presence of my daughter, and myself?"

"Who!"

"Why, — Pen Owen!"

"Not I, on my soul, sir!"

"Ellice, — what are we to think?"

"Surely, cried Ellice, starting up — surely, Mrs. Weston, — you said so."

"The message was from my poor invalid below."

"Well!"

"From P— P— Pen Owen!" faultered out poor Ellice.

"No! — HE was not in my mind, at the moment."

"Who then?—speak! — explain!"

"From my poor suffering friend — and benefactor below."

"Woman! woman! you drive me mad; is not that Pen Owen?"

"Pen Owen! — No, sir."

"You prevaricate."

"Speak!" exclaimed Ellice; "whom do you mean — who?"

"Why, Mr. Brown, — to be sure."

"Brown!" repeated the Major.

"Heaven has heard my prayer," screamed Ellice; and sunk lifeless on the bosom of her father.

The mystery was quickly cleared up; and before Ellice awakened to the reality of existence, — the Major was satisfied, that whatever he might have to object against our poor hero on other grounds, he was innocent of all that had been charged upon him, with respect to Rose Weston.

What followed may be, or rather, must be conceived by the reader, who, possessing the right end of the clew, may unravel it himself, sooner, than it was atchieved, by the party assembled. They had many cross threads to

combine, and many knots to untie, which afforded equal surprise, — but not equal satisfaction, to all parties.

Poor Mrs. Weston saw that her daughter had been the dupe of an impostor; a villain, who "could smile, and smile," — had systematically planned her ruin, — and would have transferred the disgrace of it to another. She felt every hope abandon her; and shed bitter tears over the fate of her deserted, and beloved child. The Major in vain assured her of his determination, more strongly than ever to see justice done to her, and to avenge, if not repair, her wrongs.

She was robbed of all the consolation derived from the illusion, that prudential motives alone had occasioned the mysterious conduct, of her seducer. Instead of seeking the means of redeeming the effects of an imprudent passion; it was clear, that this wretched young man had systematically planned the seduction, and only sought the means, of evading the consequences of it. — The case was hopeless; the remedy, if now within her reach, would be scarcely less ruinous to her daughter's peace, than the evil inflicted by the only hand, that could offer it.

Although she could not declare young Wettenhall, — for she had never heard his name, — to be the culprit, the previous suspicions of Major Irwine, before they fell, by a strange combination of circumstances, upon Pen Owen, — immediately suggested, that he only could be the man; — and his indignation was of course not diminished, by the designs so providently counteracted by our hero — upon his own daughter.

As it is vain longer to conceal what had been so long and so artfully covered by the consummate hypocrisy of the hopeful heir of Oldysleigh, — namely, the real character of that young gentleman, — it may be necessary even for the reader's satisfaction, to lay open certain parts of his conduct, which may yet have escaped his penetration: and to afford some further necessary knowledge respecting his birth, parentage, and education.

Mr. Fownes Wettenhall, whose son was next in the entail of the Oldysworth property, had been, in early life, placed, through the interest of his connexions, in a rising situation under government, and had, before he was thirty, arrived at the head of a board, equally respect-

able and profitable; but an insatiable thirst of money, united to a very small proportion of probity or principle, induced certain acts,—which *he* deeming to be venial errors, whilst his employers called them, in plain English, gross peculations,—he was dismissed with disgrace.

He retreated to a small paternal inheritance in Warwickshire, where for several years his time was chiefly occupied, in writing the most obsequious letters to ministers, imploring their leniency, and calling upon them to white-wash him, (that I believe is the technical term;) to many of which he received no answers, and to the few which were noticed,—a direct and unequivocal negative.

Disappointed beyond measure—as he had not very indirectly, at the same time, offered his services in securing a ministerial preponderance in a neighbouring borough, as the price of his restoration,—he intuitively, as it were, felt a call,—not for methodism,—but for patriotism; the suddeness of his conversion, however, making the one, no unapt type, of the other. I have reason to believe, that those who heard this eloquent gentleman, enlarge, at all public meetings from that period of his life upon the profligacy

and corruption of government, were generally of opinion, that he always spoke as if he were truly "master of his subject;" — and the able manner in which he has been in the habit of filling the chair, upon every question of reform, — is a sufficient proof to his friends, of the injustice of government for turning him out of a situation, which no doubt he would have continued to fill, with equal profit to himself, and — those connected with him.

This worthy patriot had early become a widower, and one only son was left to engage the cares, and occupy the affections which extended beyond the range, of his own selfish passions.

Mrs. Wettenhall, although a collateral branch of the Oldysleigh family, was almost a stranger to those who were in possession, — and it was not until Sir Luke Oldysworth, finding that the property would pass into another branch in default of heirs, that any communication was opened between the two families. We have seen, how averse the baronet was, to come into close contact with the heir presumptive, until considerations, connected with the dignity and interests of the family, impelled him to it.

Under this view of the case, the elder Wettenhall, whose advances towards Sir Luke had

never been met with cordiality, entertained the prudent suspicion, that the Baronet might yet marry, and exclude his son from the inheritance. Such a man would necessarily arrange matters, so as to have two strings to his bow; and if his son should not come to a fortune ready made, he must be supplied with the readiest means, of making one for himself.'

The boy, therefore, had been placed in the office of an attorney in Birmingham, several years before Sir Luke had made up his mind to declare his intentions to the father, and pave the way for the reception of his heir, at Oldysleigh Grange. When that important communication, however, was made, young Wettenhall was entered at Cambridge, whither a tutor of his own selection accompanied him, in order to qualify him for his new rank, and approaching honors.

This tutor was no other than the reverend Mr. Martin Loup, whom the reader may recollect, in the capacity of domestic chaplain to Sir Luke. The worthy priest, willingly transferred his allegiance from the existing head of the family, to the rising hope of it; and secured his interests effectually, by transferring that minute knowledge, which his peculiar vo-

cation had enabled him to obtain, of every shade of character, prejudice, and failing, which marked the individuals of the Oldysleigh junto, — to the *porte feuille* of his apt, and really accomplished pupil.

Inheriting the beauty of his mother, who was a distinguished toast in her day, — and aided by a natural grace, and ease of manner, — which his early initiation into society, through the means of his father's multiplied sources of intrigue, had cultivated — he had learned to adapt himself to various characters, and to be, in the worst sense, all things to all men. In the attorney's office, he had learned a more dexterous use of his weapons, and could at will reason like a Machiavel, — act the Tartuffe, — or put Tom Paine himself, to the blush.

Such was the accomplished Mr. Francis Wettenhall, when he attended the summons of Sir Luke Oldysworth. He quickly perceived that Pen Owen, — the only individual of whose character his tutor was unable to supply the materials, and which, indeed, might have puzzled a more honest, and able scrutineer, — was the very reverse of himself, and that he would require peculiar, and extraordinary manage-

ment — with the other members of the Oldysleigh party, he intuitively saw, what was to be done with them.

To undermine the character of our hero, was among his first schemes, and the cold calculation of interests, — no less than the incitements of passion, — led to the ruin, of poor Rose Weston. His success in this diabolical intrigue, we may trace from the first suggestion of the imputed crime, — occasioned by his leaving an open note, addressed to him, as Pen Owen, *by accident* on Sir Luke's breakfast table, — and the subsequent disappearance of Mrs. Weston and her daughter, which he contrived should tally, as nearly as possible, with the departure of Pen Owen, from Oldysleigh.

On Ellice Craig, his designs were of a different nature, or rather were derived from a different motive, — for he had really fallen desperately in love with her person and accomplishments — that is, he was charmed with her beauty, and resolved to possess himself of her, *coute qui coute*. We have seen how he was caught — like many of his cunning precursors — in his own snare; and how the victim was rescued, just as she was about to be immolated, to his

base purposes. His proposal of pursuing her, was to withdraw Pen from the protection of his friends, and the rashness and intemperance of our hero, afforded every facility that he could possibly desire, to his design, of keeping them estranged from him. He had the art of undermining his character, and colouring his follies so as to appear his advocate, whilst he was, betraying him to destruction. He defended him boldly against charges mysteriously implied, — and with reluctance, disclosed partial details, — for the purpose of leaving his friends, to draw the stronger inferences.

He early discovered the retreat of Major Irwine, and assailed poor Ellice, on the side, on which she was most vulnerable. He overpowered her with notes, and demands for a private interview. He endeavoured to assume an authority over her, from the possession of her secret attachment to Pen Owen. — He laboured to instil into her mind doubts, respecting the identity of Major Irwine. — He swore to die if she rejected his love. — All this was ineffectual. She had no confidant but her father, and to him all these communications were referred.

At length, recollecting the scene which had passed the morning previous to her elopement, he gave her to understand, that the life of Pen Owen alone could atone for the insult he had incurred in her cause; and here, indeed, he evinced his penetration. She answered him, — implored him to give up all thoughts of revenge — and — promised to hold herself his debtor.

A private interview was the condition on his part; in which he assured her he could afford her information respecting Pen, which he deemed it necessary to her honor, no less than to his safety, to communicate. She hesitated, — she would have consulted her father, yet dreaded to be refused. Her apprehensions were awakened. She knew not what she did, and against her better judgment, consented to receive him for five minutes in presence of her maid, on an evening, when she knew her father was engaged to dine abroad.

It was the day on which Major Irwine had appointed to dine with our hero, at a coffee-house, — whose acquaintance he was anxious to cultivate, as we have seen, — in order to probe his character, and to learn, if it were really calculated, to make his daughter happy.

Wettenhall, who never lost sight of the parties, foresaw the frustration of all his plans, if this intimacy were suffered to continue uninterrupted. He, therefore, despatched a porter with the mysterious note, which the reader will recollect was delivered to our hero, at the dinner-table. He had sent the man, (who was in his regular pay,) from a public-house in the neighbourhood of Major Irwine's house, where he was anxiously awaiting the arrival of the note, to fix the hour of meeting with Ellice.

Although Pen had no clew to ascertain the messenger, accident had directed his steps rightly in the first instance, and when he had left the more crowded streets, the figure of a man running at some distance before him, encouraged him to follow.

He suddenly lost sight of the object of his pursuit, for he had *dived* into the house of assignation, in the immediate vicinity of Major Irwine's residence. Wettenhall, having received his account of the pursuit, and dreading the *rencontre*, left the field open for Pen,—whom Ellice's maid mistook, in the obscurity of the night, for his rival.

The strange scene, in which our hero was

thereby involved, will be recollected by the reader, and the train of errors, into which he was subsequently hurried, contributed in no small degree, to give effect to the plans of Wettenhall.

He found it necessary, however, to reconcile himself to our hero, whose volatile and uncertain conduct, was likely to baffle a mere common system of *espionage*. As a friend, he perceived the advantage, that a sober calculation of consequences would have over the thoughtless, and hasty determinations of his rival; and we have seen enough of his success, in the progress of his manœuvres, to appreciate the deep sagacity, which induced this well-digested policy. Still Pen Owen was too impracticable, and too regardless of consequences, either to be drilled by arguments into measures he disapproved, — or diverted from those he had resolved upon — by motives of prudence or discretion.

The duel was one of those unlooked-for occurrences in the fortunes of a general, which at once decide the fate of a campaign. Could Wettenhall have prevailed upon him to fly the country, he doubted not, he should have been able to effect an eternal breach, between him

and his friends; and it was his obstinacy upon this head, that drove his treacherous adviser to take measures, which his prudence, and policy would, otherwise, have rejected. It is thus that cunning and knavery so often overreach themselves.

When, to his extreme horror, and surprise, Pen Owen was pointed out to him, by Major Irwine, at the window of Mrs. Weston's lodgings, he, without being master of all the circumstances, saw that prompt measures were necessary, to secure his absence from the scene of action,—and upon his subsequent visit to that good woman, he easily drew the whole story from her, and lost not a moment in making his arrangements for that purpose. He foresaw that Major Irwine was on the point of unravelling the mystery, in which he had studiously enveloped the story of the unfortunate Rose Weston, of whose connexion with the Major's confidential servant he had not been previously aware. Delay would, therefore, be as fatal to his schemes upon Ellice Irwine, as to his machinations against the man, whom he considered as his rival in her affections.

In the course of the day, he learnt from the

Major, his intention of demanding a full explanation on the morrow, from Mrs. Weston, and he arranged so as to secure the daughter, when he should leave her in the carriage. His plan was to await his arrival at Mrs. Weston's, and when he was safely lodged, to proceed in the manner we have seen. The effect of the forged note, seemed to crown his designs with complete success.

His next step was to communicate with Pen's landlady, in whose hands he placed one of the placards, offering a large reward for the apprehension of John Brown, who, he assured her, was her identical lodger. Measures were accordingly taken for his capture, and Wettenhall felt secure of time being thus gained, for the execution of his whole combined measures. He had, at the same time, in order to make "assurance doubly sure," directed the person who had appeared as a money-lender,—but was in fact a creature of his own,—to follow his intended victim, and if he should be liberated, by a premature discovery of his real name and character, to arrest him on the spot, for the sum advanced, and immediately to convey him to some lock-up house, from which he calculated,

he could not find the means of extricating himself in time, to interfere with his projects.

This plan failed, as we have seen, owing to our hero's sudden resolution, of going to Mrs. Weston's lodgings, in order to confront the Major. — The myrmidons of Mrs. Grub, not being prepared for so early a start, were not at hand to secure him.

The real party of runners, who had tracked him on the previous evening to Mrs. Weston's, in the mean time seized upon their prey, and the landlady, to her utter surprise, was arrested at the same moment, for harbouring — so suspicious a character.

Wettenhall, equally surprised and disappointed, at finding Pen on the spot, to attempt a rescue, in the moment of his supposed incarceration, and at the probability of all errors, being cleared up, by an examination before a body of men, over whom he could have no influence, determined, — after lodging poor Ellice in the secluded house he had taken for the occasion, under the safe custody of one of his chief agents, — to carry his stronger expedients into immediate effect.

He hastily summoned two persons, who were

in the confidence of his father and himself, and directed them to lay an instant information before the secretary of state, charging our hero, with treasonable designs, offering, at the same time, to appear, in order to make good their allegations against him.

These men arrived at the secretary of state's office, a few minutes after Pen had left it, upon his discharge from custody, and his steps were easily traced, by what had occurred between the officer and the hackney-coachman. A warrant was immediately made out for his re-apprehension; but the informers were detained in custody, by the direction of Lord Killcullane, who thought he perceived something sinister in the manner, and mode, in which their depositions had been given in.

The subsequent mistake of the officer, entrusted with the warrant for Pen's apprehension, not only baffled the deep-laid scheme, but, as if Providence had interfered, to return "the poisoned chalice" to the lips of him, who had prepared the ingredients for another's destruction, — delayed the execution of his plans, so as to frustrate them altogether.

Old Wettenhall, who had organized an in-

surrection of the radicals in the country, had, upon information being given against him, been brought up to town a few hours previous to these events; — and the messenger, who traced his son to Oldysleigh, was the more strongly confirmed in his error, by thinking he had discovered in the supposed Pen Owen, an *alias*, for one, of the Warwickshire conspirators.

Upon his arrival in town, Wettenhall was committed to close custody, and his agents, who had been employed, to lodge the information against our hero, — well knowing how little prepared they were for a too strict examination into their own conduct, — availed themselves of the occasion, to turn evidence against both the Wettenhalls, and to lay open all their designs against the government.

The young man had, indeed, been diverted, from his habitual intrigues, in some degree, by what he considered of infinitely more importance than the reform of government; — namely, the prosecution of his own plans, and the gratification of his own appetites. — Still he had maintained a regular communication with his father, and had too far committed himself, with the corresponding cabals in London, to escape

the general danger, which, upon a developement of their plans, must inevitably be incurred, by all the radical leaders.

Before his arrival, therefore, in the custody of the messenger, a warrant had actually been issued for his apprehension; and when he appeared under a supposed misnomer, he was recognized as a delinquent, and immediately committed. In the meantime, Lord Killcullane had found out Pen Owen, and communicated to him what had passed; informing him, that the two men who had turned king's evidence, had given sufficient information upon the subject, to release him altogether from even a suspicion, of being concerned in the conspiracy, laid to his charge.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that Wettenhall was the respondent of all poor Pen's mysterious advertisements, as well as his correspondent, whenever a correspondent was necessary, for the furtherance of his plan; with the exception, however, of the reproachful letter supposed to have come from Ellice Craig, on the evening of our hero's pugilistic exhibition, which she had so inopportunely witnessed. This was, in fact, written by the wretched Rose

Weston, who was the companion of Ellice in the carriage, as we have already learnt, and delivered, by the no less wounded mother, who had traced Wettenhall to Bury-Street, and ascertained the lodgings — to be those of Mr. Pen Owen.

Having thus acquitted ourselves of the tedious, but necessary duty of accounting for what might otherwise appear unaccountable, — we return to the more agreeable part of our office, to watch the dispersion of the clouds, which have too long obscured the happiness of those who are more deserving our attention, and to rescue our hero, if it be possible, from the consequences of his impetuous and irregular habits.

CHAPTER XI.

It is natural to suppose, that Ellice Irwine was not long, in persuading her father, to a reconciliation with her calumniated, and unfortunate lover; and it may, as naturally be inferred, that the attendance of the apothecary, was no longer considered necessary—after she had presented herself to our hero with a smiling countenance of pardon and conciliation, — hand in hand with her father. Every mystery was quickly solved, — and every ambiguity cleared up.

The Major found, and admitted, that all Pen's errors, and excesses, had been on the side of virtue; but took occasion to remark, — for the happiness of his daughter was deeply involved in the question, — that so nearly do all excesses of intemperance approximate, in their ultimate consequences—from whatever source derived—that it is difficult for the world to discriminate, or decide upon their origin;—that the passions

confound all things and all essences;—and when once unduly excited, leave us as little masters of our actions,—as the man who is utterly devoid of principle altogether.

Pen acknowledged, in humble contrition, that he had been the ingenious artificer of his own misfortunes; and that his follies had betrayed him into snares, which a little coolness and foresight might certainly have taught him to avoid. He received the prize of his repentance, and was only deterred from running into some new extravagance in the expression of his joy, by an observation from the Major,—qualified, however, by a smile,—"that he feared it would require a longer course of discipline, to render him a fit depository for the cares and concerns, not to speak of the happiness, of another partner—in so tottering a firm."

Perhaps the Major did not illustrate, or enforce his admonitions and suggestions, in the most exemplary manner, when the conversation turned upon the conduct of Wettenhall, and the measures necessary to be taken with respect to his treachery towards poor Rose Weston;—and his example, rather than his precept, appeared to influence Pen, when he vehemently swore to

"wash out the disgrace in the villain's blood, — if he refused to make the only reparation now in his power, for the injury he had inflicted upon the unhappy girl!"

Ellice Irwine, whose conduct was a living commentary upon the virtues she professed, would have smiled at the consistency, — equally conspicuous in her father and her lover, if other considerations had not induced her, seriously and solemnly to protest against any violent, or intemperate proceedings; referring them to the legitimate authority of Sir Luke, which was more likely to prevail with a man of Wettenhall's character, than any presumed right to commit the crime of shedding man's blood, — upon the self-created claim, of being the champions of virtue. —

Pen thought it due to his uncle, to lose no time in clearing himself from the imputations which he now first discovered lay upon his character. He, therefore, the moment he was permitted to hold a pen, despatched as plain and intelligible an account of all that had passed, as he could arrange, to the capacity of Caleb; requesting him to abstain from any abrupt communication of this unpleasant information to Sir

Luke, or rather to defer it altogether until he had an opportunity of consulting Mr. Mapletoft, on the best manner of breaking it to him.

It has already been observed, that Lord Killcullane sought out our hero, in order to set his mind at rest, upon a question, with which it had never been incommoded, namely, — his intended arrest; and Pen, — who had now retired to his old lodgings, in Bury-street, — received his lordship with every acknowledgment of the interest, and kindness he had evinced towards one, who felt how little he merited it, at his hands. He learnt from his lordship, for the first time, this fresh trait of Wettenhall's villainy, and the manner in which that unprincipled young man had fallen into the snare, prepared for another.

The return of the express, which he had despatched to his uncle, Caleb, brought him the sincere and affectionate congratulations of the worthy Mapletoft, and his wife, upon the evidence of his innocence, now so unequivocally established. The intelligence was broken by degrees to Sir Luke Oldysworth, who had not yet recovered, from this bitter disappointment, and frustration, of all his hopes. He sincerely congratulated himself, however, upon having

escaped the trap laid by Wettenhall, to make himself master of his un-entailed property,—which was the real motive of his last hasty—and to him fatal journey to Oldysleigh.

This young man had so insinuated himself into the favour and confidence of the baronet that he doubted not his influence to carry this point; nor of his being, by these means, enabled to leave England, before the report of his conduct, should reach the ears of his credulous benefactor. But it was ordered otherwise, and the presence of Mapletoft delayed the execution of the plan, which the still more inopportune intrusion, of the officers of justice, utterly baffled.

Pen Owen, left for a few hours to his reflections, sat near his window, ruminating upon the strange events which had been crowded into the short period, of his independent existence—and on the prospect of happiness, now before him, as the storm cleared away. He could not, however, anticipate the realization, of his own happiness, without reverting to those of the kind being, to whom he stood so much indebted.

Wettenhall was in the hands of justice, and his fate uncertain. He was, at all events, now

out of the reach of any measures, he might have contemplated, in order to compel him to his duty, respecting the Westons. In the event of his being found guilty, all hope of redeeming the love-sick girl was at an end; — if acquitted, he still doubted whether her happiness was likely to be secured by an union with such a man. In either case, he trembled to reflect upon the consequences, to so frail, and fragile a victim to indiscreet passion.

In the midst of these ruminations, his attention was attracted by a crowd of people, gradually accumulating, round a very elevated lamp post, which had been erected during his absence, in front of an opposite house. Several workmen were employed in some preparation, the nature of which he could not well comprehend, and he approached the window, in order to watch their movements, and satisfy his curiosity.

He had scarcely advanced two steps before he experienced a shock, and was nearly struck down, by the shattering report, of something like the explosion of a thunderbolt. The glass shivered about his ears, and it was some moments, before he could sufficiently account for these extraordinary effects.

Loud screams, and exclamations of horror, issued from the house, where the preparations he had advanced to witness on the opposite side of the way, had been carrying on. He perceived volumes of smoke rolling from the upper windows,—the frames of which, had been forced into the street,—and several persons within, running to and fro, in a state of disorder, and distraction.

It was not in the nature of Pen to be an idle spectator in any scene, much less, in one where he, for a moment, could consider his services of any possible use.

He ran down stairs, and was, in a few seconds, through the crowd,—which had now encreased to a mob,—and in the apartment, which had awakened his interest. Here he beheld indeed a chaos, from which a better ordered mind than his, would have found it difficult, to draw any immediate inference.—Fragments of glass and copper,—of which just enough was left to show, that they had once been globes, cylinders and tubes,—lay confusedly scattered in every direction, about a room, not much larger than a closet.—An atmosphere, impregnated with stench, that was scarcely endurable, by the most hardened olfactories, and

to which two or three enterprising and intruding individuals, like himself, appeared to have fallen victims, as they lay strewed among broken stools, or chairs, still left standing around the wreck; — added to this, the smoke or vapour, which had not yet escaped through the broken windows, prevented our hero, —who stood aghast at the door,—from penetrating into the mysteries of the extraordinary scene, before him.

At length a woman, who seemed more interested than the rest, coming forth from an inner room, — half suffocated by the steams which issued around her, and wholly inflamed by her rage, — roared aloud for assistance: "Get the ingins, and get out o' my ouse ye wagabones all. — A'nt it enow to have my ouse flammergastered, and about my hears, and my poor dear usband blown to the devil, — without your cummin to make things worse, and raising a ugh and cry, about my permises. Get along you, — Bess, what d'ye stand shivering and slammocking there, when one ould fool's dying, and the devil as carried away t'other? — Why feckens, if the floor bayn't given vay."

The last clause was the only one, that seemed to attract the attention of her auditors. This

was no sooner uttered, however, than the whole party took the alarm; — rushing to the door, and bearing perhaps a more than usual weight upon the narrow stair-case, a loud crack confirmed the retiring party in their fears, — and realized, in some measure, a danger, which was before only chimerical; for, being now rendered desperate, the more enterprising leapt over the ballusters, — and in their efforts, broke them down, and brought after them, all, whose temerity or caution, had laid hold upon them, as their guide and prop.

In the midst of the screams, and groans, which issued from the stair-case, Pen, — whom no experience of past indiscretions could deter from the gratification of his curiosity, and, let me add, the better motive of volunteering his assistance, — in vain endeavoured to extract something from the voluble lady, — who evidently was the queen of the ruins, which she bestrode. She was impenetrable to his appeals — and only insisted upon his, " raggamuffin companions."

When, however, he heard her vociferate for a doctor, and hence inferring that some person had been wounded or injured, — as she herself

appeared sound, certainly in wind, —and apparently in limb,—he advanced towards the door, through which she at first had made her appearance. "Art thee a doctor or potecaryman?" demanded the Amazon.

Pen, who could never tell an untruth, — even to carry higher points,—would not condescend to one, on such an occasion; but continuing to advance, she rudely seized his arm, and insisted upon his "woiding her premises," or she would send "for one, as should make him." Pen was in general, very chary of the fair sex; but a groan from the inner room, induced him to overstep the usual bounds, prescribed by decorum upon such occasions, and very dexterously extricating his arm from her grasp, and as dexterously turning her,—with infinite gentleness however,—over his left leg,—he dropped her safely on the ground, — whipped into the room, —and turned the key upon her.

He approached a bed, across which lay a man, with an oil-skin cap strained on his head, and sleeves of the same material over those of his shirt, — his face partly covered with a blanket, and the whole apparently much scorched and inflamed. Pen approached him, and

demanded, in a voice of sympathy, if he felt himself seriously injured.

"Blown up!" groaned the patient.

"Good heaven, sir,—where are you wounded?"

Before an answer could be returned, the enraged landlady, whose hands and lungs were pretty equally exercised on the outside of the door,—vowed every species of vengeance, which the law allowed,—or forbade,—upon the head of our hero. He condescended to a parley, through the key-hole,—entreated her to come to terms,—asserted the danger of neglecting the suffering patient,—and,—the only clause in the terms of capitulation, which appeared to be worthy of notice,—pledged a high bribe, if she would send for medical aid, for which he would be responsible in the article of payment.

The war-trumpet ceased, and the gates were opened, with a declaration on her part, "that now she believed he was a gemman,—as he behaved himself as a gemman ought;—thof he mought as well not have demeaned himself, by lifting his and agen a defenceless creatur, of the weaker sect!" Every apology was given and received, necessary to restore order, and she departed, to obtain the necessary succour.

Pen now began again to address the wounded man, and lifting one of his hands, in order to feel the pulse, — heard his own name, uttered, in something between a sigh and a groan. "Do you know me then, sir?" demanded he of his patient.

"No bless you, that war'nt I!"—Pen stared, and looked about him, and concluded it was an illusion. "Where," continued he, "where are your pains?"

"All over."

"Pen Owen!" was again distinctly uttered, in a faint and languid tone of voice.

"Who is that?" exclaimed our hero, starting up.

"The devil han't a fetched him then, as Madge said," groaned the man on the bed.

"Who are you speaking of?" cried Pen, searching round the little room, which was crowded with the odds and ends of what had been furniture, — and with jars, tin cans, and stone bottles, which occupied every interval left by it. Stooping at length, to look under the bed, he observed, on the further side, something that resembled a human form; and, regardless of the other wounded man, he

wrenched the bed from its situation, and extricated from a heap of non-descript drapery, consisting of baize curtains, foul linen, and wearing apparel, — the scorched and singed effigies, of what once was — GRIFFITH OWEN, — no less a man, than father to our hero himself, and the very pink of projectors!

Had Pen been aware, how little real injury had been sustained by his ingenious parent, it is possible, his risible faculties might have been excited, by the ridiculous circumstances of his situation; — as it was, he felt no sentiment, but that of excruciating anxiety, at the doubtful appearance of the being, to whom he owed his existence.

He lifted him in his arms, and though, he was not able, like the pious Eneas, to bear him from the flames, (which unfortunately raged *within*,) he did his best to extricate him from the ruins, which no "dire Ulysses, nor fraudful Sinon," — but his own skill, and ingenuity, — had brought about his ears!

The fresh air, and the timely interference of a medical man, — who now made his appearance, — soon restored him to his perfect senses, *at least* to the "Status, quo ante Bellum."

His first exclamation was, to curse the stupidity of his fellow-labourer, "for closing the *stop-cock*, — at the moment it ought to have been opened."

"You cried out, Stop cock;" grumbled the wounded tyro, on the bed.

"To be sure I did, — to open it."

"You said, Stop!"

"Stop-cock, I said."

"Well — and I did stop, cock."

"You should have turned it."

"I did turn it."

"Zounds, — you turned it the wrong way."

"You said, Stop cock."

"What then? — blockhead!"

"I did stop, cock."

Pen foreseeing no end to a discussion, in which the first terms, of the argument, were so little understood, interfered to postpone it, at least, to a more suitable occasion.

The poor underling was more seriously injured, and Pen, — before his father was sufficiently recovered, to be removed to the lodging opposite, — had taken upon him to remunerate the landlady, for the wounds of every description, inflicted upon her household gods, — her husband, — and furniture, inclusive.

When our hero had fairly housed his parent in his own domicile, he naturally began to enquire into the occasion of the accident, and the history of his unexpected return from the continent. But although the digression, and speculative turn of the communication, might command the dutiful attention of a son, it would, I fear, be borne with some impatience,—by an ordinary reader. It may be fair, however, to state generally, that it included at least a century of new projects: and that the late experiment,—the failure of which he attributed wholely to the awkwardness of his coadjutor,—a journeyman druggist, on whom he speculated as a promising chemist,—had been taken up on a sudden, upon perceiving parts of London lighted with gas,—in the mode of which he thought he could make some considerable improvements. His object was to ignite the gas, without the apparatus or interference of a lamplighter, which he scientifically demonstrated to his son might be effected,—in spite of the late explosion, and its consequent failure.

He had left France, (having been previously honoured with the diploma of corresponding member of the Institute,) full of a scheme for converting the soil of the London slaughter-

houses, into pure indigo — when, passing over Westminster Bridge, on his return to London, the gas lights first struck him, and his rapid imagination flying off at a tangent — in a moment suggested the ingenious improvement, — the result of which we have just witnessed.

Pen did his utmost to console his father, under his present disappointment, and having already sufficient business upon his hands, proposed that he should immediately set off for Gloucestershire, whither he would follow him as speedily as possible. His late failure, or probably the want of some immediate project, to fill up the void left by it, induced Griffith to listen to the proposition; and having been induced to take some measures suggested by the apothecary, to alleviate the pains, and mollify the the bruises he had incurred by the accident; it was arranged, that, on the following morning, he should begin his journey westward.

Pen, now satisfied with having performed his duty, as a son, felt himself at liberty to pursue his own objects; among the first of which, it may readily be presumed, was a visit to the Major, and his lovely daughter, from whom he had been absent, — the reader will scarcely believe it, — several hours.

Having related all that had occurred in the interval, to his attentive and interested auditors, he again resumed the conversation, respecting the unfortunate Rose Weston.

After much discussion, and the rejection of several schemes, it was resolved, that the mother should, by degrees, inform her daughter, of the real state of the case,—and, by an appeal to her sense of religion, and to her own dignity, induce her to shake off the chains of a man, whom, to connect herself with further, would tend only to degrade, and render her situation desperate. But before they could take the necessary measures, to carry their plan into effect, a circumstance arose, to turn their speculations into a new channel.

We left Griffith Owen, covered with unguents and plaisters—and, it may be presumed, from the known experience of the attendant apothecary, carefully supplied with sedatives, if not direct narcotics—reposing in Pen's bed, which he had resigned to him. The old gentleman had, however, scarcely composed himself, when he was roused by a violent altercation between two persons evidently ascending the staircase,—a discordant duetto, between a counter tenor, and a running bass.

"You said," roared, the latter, "that Mr. Owen was at home — and I must see him."

"I said he was at home, but was not to be disturbed," squeeled the Soprano.

"Stand out of my way, woman — if I die for it, I must see him," — was all that Griffith heard, when the door of the chamber burst open, and the strange voice challenged the disturbed projector, by a demand, "whether he was disposed to hear reason — or at once sacrifice the life of one, — or both to his vengeance."

Griffith started up in the bed, but the room having been carefully darkened in order to favour his repose, he could only discover the figure of a man, relieved by the light of the open door behind him. He was too much astonished to return an immediate answer — and was, moreover, busily speculating upon the nature of the demand — which delay, not agreeing with the evident precipitancy of the querist, the question was again repeated, with the addition, that "his pistols were ready loaded, and that the decision of Mr. Owen must be prompt, for that there was but a moment — for the alternative." Saying which, he drew a brace of formidable weapons, from under his coat, and again demanded — "peace or war."

"It is useless," continued he in a tone of strong agitation, "to enter into any explanation — the time is past — disguise is at an end — I am a villain — admitted — you wish for my life — take it — it is fairly forfeit to you — I would have ruined you — I failed — you are the winner — I am lost for ever — but if you prefer to be a man of humanity, to what is called a man of honour, — I may yet redeem the innocent, and do justice to one, who can receive justice at no other hand."

"Why, who the devil are you?" exclaimed Griffith, who now found words and a pause to utter them; "you wouldn't shoot me in this condition!"

"Who — who are *you*?" exclaimed the stranger, retreating in surprise, and disappointment.

"Tell me first, sir," — cried Griffith, "what business you have here?"

"I came to see Mr. Owen, sir," retorted the other.

"I am Mr. Owen."

"How is this? — I come to claim —"

"You can have no claim upon me, sir," sputtered the angry welchman.

"I know nothing of you, sir," replied the

other, interrupting him; "where — where is Mr. Pen Owen? — the woman, confound her, told me he was at home. — I am lost past redemption."

"Here he is!" exclaimed Pen, who heard the question vociferated, as he ascended the stairs — having returned for some papers for the Major; "who is it that asks the question?"

"Your bitterest foe," was the answer.

"Wettenhall?"

"The same — ready to adopt any alternative, so that it but quickly present itself; — I come armed for my own sacrifice, if your justice demands it; — it is for you to decide — but in a moment."

"Stop, rash man," exclaimed Pen; "what is it you would propose?"

"To surrender my life to you, rather than to the laws of my country."

"I am no murderer, sir," returned Pen, with an air of contempt.

"You may be."

"How?"

"By refusing to hear a desperate man, whose life hangs upon the breath of your lips."

"Explain yourself, sir."

"It must be brief, — The officers of justice, from whose hands I have escaped, are on the scent, and I am resolved not to be re-taken alive. I am involved in conspiracies against the state, — for which I destined *you* to be responsible."

"Villain!" exclaimed our hero.

"Spare your reproaches. — Invective, even, cannot shake my purpose, — I come to expiate my offence, — and you may, if you choose, be my executioner, but ——"

"On, sir!" — cried Pen.

"Ambition fired my soul, — and I regarded you as an obstacle to it; — I was your enemy; — I would have destroyed you; — my schemes are frustrated, — and I have not so far unmanned myself, as to thirst wantonly for blood. — I am accursed enough, without that, — nay, my accumulated guilt has brought down its own vengeance, and there is but one point on which I can make atonement, — Rose Weston." —

"Ha!" exclaimed Pen Owen, — "what of her?"

"I have been a villain to ——"

"A villain, indeed."

"Spare me yet a moment. — I would do her

justice. — Upon this condition, I am content to live."

"What mean you?" cried Pen.

"That if she will condescend to share my fortunes, in a strange land, I ——"

"Will marry her?"

"In your hands is my fate, sir, — use it with more discretion and humanity than I meditated to do — when I thought your's in mine."

"What is it you demand of me?"

"The interference of an honest man between a villain, — and his hopeless destiny!"

"You desire, that I should propose to the unfortunate victim — "

"Again, again I appeal to you to spare me: I am scarcely master of myself. — Do not goad me on, to desperation. Speak! — aye, or no, decides my fate — beyond the power of recall."

"I am not to be intimidated by this bravado," cried Pen, — piqued at what he thought an improper threat.

"Then despair be my portion!" exclaimed the infatuated Wettenhall, raising a pistol to his head, — which — as Pen suddenly rushed forward, and struck from its direction, discharged its contents, full upon the bed, in which poor Griffith

Owen lay, listening in astonishment to the extraordinary conversation, which was taking place. He darted from between the sheets, — fortunately without a wound, — and rushing upon Wettenhall, seized him by the collar, — demanding in words scarcely articulate, — whether the villain was come to murder father, and son at one blow?"

There is no saying to what extremity, a desperate being like Wettenhall, might have been driven, by such an attack, in such a moment, — had not our hero, who, like most heroes, — or we should have no occasion to talk about them, — possessed both presence of mind, and activity of body, sufficient to restrain either party from proceeding to extremities. He delicately but promptly withdrew the passionate Griffith, from his hold upon Wettenhall's neckcloth, — and, at the same time, placed himself in such a position, as to ward off any attempt at retaliation, on the part, of his younger antagonist.

He prevailed, — after some friendly altercation, — upon his father to retreat to his bed, and pointing to the door of the next room, followed Wettenhall into it. His resentment subsided, as he viewed the state of this young man's mind.

He saw he was in earnest, and laboured to reason him into a sense of his situation, and the increased enormity, he was thus rashly about to incur.

This produced little effect, — nothing short of a pledge from Pen, to become his advocate with Rose Weston, would reconcile him to life.

Nothing, — not even the extremity, to which he saw his former rival reduced, — could induce Pen, to promise any thing further, than to state his proposals to the unfortunate mother; — to advocate his cause he owned — was impossible.

Terms, upon this basis, were at length agreed upon, and Wettenhall was to give our hero information of his abode, from the first foreign port he could make, — should he be able ultimately to elude the vigilance of the police.

Pen, after having appeased his father, — who was outrageous at the thought, of being shot in his bed, without knowing why or wherefore, when he had challenged death in so many other forms *en philosophe*, — lost not a moment in returning to relate the curious scene, in which he had been just involved, — to the Major and his daughter.

After much discussion, it was agreed that the

communication should be made, first to the mother; and — if she thought, in the desperate state of her daughter's mind — the almost, as desperate expedient should be resorted to, — such precautionary steps might be taken, as were necessary, gradually to disclose the state of the case, to the unfortunate girl herself.

The Major, and Pen accordingly proceeded to Mrs. Weston's lodgings, which had been hired by the former, in the immediate neighbourhood of his own house.

The good woman received the communication with a mixed sentiment, in which affection for her daughter and apprehensions for her life, conflicting with her detestation of the baseness and hypocrisy of her seducer, — rendered it almost impossible for her, to come to any definite decision.

Pen thought the severe retribution, which his crimes had brought down upon his head, might lead, in so young a man, to a profitable repentance; and expressed his determination to use all his influence with Mr. Mapletoft and Sir Luke, to make him such a pecuniary allowance, as might take from him, any temptation to resume his former courses. The Major coincided

in this mode of proceeding; especially, as the relative connexion between the Baronet and his heir was still unbroken, however it might hereafter be affected, by a sentence of outlawry, should justice be roused to punish with its full vigour his meditated crimes, against government.

He despaired, however, of any real conversion, as his vices appeared to proceed, not from any excess of his passions, — but from a rooted, and obvious contempt of all moral principle. He had no glass, in which to reflect the enormity of his transgressions. — He had no fund, upon which to draw for principles, to give a new impulse to his conduct. — He had not perverted virtuous sentiments, — but was habitually grounded in those of an opposite tendency.

It was at all events hazardous — and he could not encourage any hope of such a man being able to contribute to the peace, and happiness of an artless girl, — an alien from her friends and her country. — The poor mother could not, however, altogether lose sight, of the possible alternative. The case appeared hopeless — but the life of her child might be saved; —

and this was a powerful consideration, with the unhappy widow.

The Major did not—could not attempt to reason with her feelings. He still thought, that although it might be unnecessary to detail the whole of Wettenhall's duplicity and villainy,—such parts, as related to his connexion with the Westons themselves, should be unreservedly opened to the poor girl. She ought not, he observed, to be cajoled into a connexion, thus problematical in its results, without being so far acquainted with her future husband's character, as to enable her to form a judgment herself, of what might ultimately contribute to colour her destiny.

In order to avoid any thing which might give too sudden a shock to her feelings, it was arranged, that Mrs. Weston should by degrees, inform her daughter, of what was absolutely necessary to be known;—and at first, by distant hints, and allusions, give birth to suspicions, which might be afterwards rather softened, than exaggerated. This plan was accordingly adopted.

Whether the imagination of the suffering

victim, of her seducer's arts, was too vivid, or the precautions of the poor mother, were not sufficiently guarded, it is difficult to determine; but a messenger, despatched in haste to Major Irwine and our hero, early in the morning succeeding that in which the foregoing consultation had taken place,—demanded their immediate attendance at Mrs. Weston's lodgings. They obeyed the summons without hesitation, and meeting the poor woman, in the outer-room, anxiously inquired what had occurred, to occasion so sudden a message.

Wringing her hands, and in a state of bitter agony, she informed them, that she verily believed she had killed her child;—that though she had proceeded with the utmost caution, to open the subject to her, she had at once taken the alarm,—she would not be persuaded but that he was dead; and that the Major had thus, verified his threats, against him.—"She," continued the poor woman, "refuses to hear any explanation—she interrupts me, if I attempt to speak; and incessantly weeps his loss, as if he actually lay a corpse, before her."

The Major looked at our hero, whilst he took Mrs. Weston's hand, as if about to lead her

into her daughter's apartment. Pen observed, that, under the existing impression, the Major's presence might have too powerful an effect upon the poor girl; but that, perhaps, *he* might be able to lead the conversation, so as to excite her attention, and bring home the necessary conviction to her mind. The Major, assenting to this opinion, took his seat, and dismissed Mrs. Weston, and Pen, into the adjoining room.

The latter was deeply struck with the appearance, of the unhappy Rose. She sat, as usual, in an arm chair, supported by a pillow, on which her head reclined. Her beautiful hair hung in profusion about her shoulders, and her eyes, — fixed and immovable, — seemed not to notice his entrance. He approached her, and gently taking one of her hands, — which hung carelessly over the arm of the chair, — he, in the softest tone, inquired after her health. She then turned her eyes upon him, and seeming to scan every feature, — with a deep sigh, abruptly snatched from him, the hand he had taken; and crossing it with the other upon her breast, scarcely articulated, so as to be heard by Pen — "No! no! — *He* is not here!"

"No, my dear Miss Weston, — *he* is not here; but he is well. —"

"Are you a deceiver too, sir!" cried Rose, turning upon him, with a look that went to his heart.

"On my soul, I am not!—he lives, be assured."

"And how, shall I be assured?"

"By one, who never yet deceived woman!"

"And yet *he* even, deceived me!" sighed she, bursting into tears.

"And still you love him, Rose!"

"Who shall deny me that comfort,—he can harm no one—now!"

"He lives, Rose—indeed he lives, to atone for his—"

"Crimes!" screamed the bewildered Rose. "Aye, aye,—so mamma told me, of crimes—crimes!—Oh, wicked, wicked Major Irwine,—WHO charged him, till you threatened?"

"You would not be unjust, Rose,—Major Irwine has been your best,—your warmest friend."

"Indeed, indeed he has," cried she, through her tears,—"but he did not love—poor Pen Owen!"

"You are in an error, indeed, indeed you are,—we wish to clear all up, for your satisfaction."

"What satisfaction can I have now that he is gone?"

"He is gone, only for you to follow him: on you alone, my sweet Rose, it depends to join him, — on— "

"I am ready, sir, — my business in this world, is past and done."

"Nay, nay, do not misunderstand me — he is only gone abroad, and there will await you — he has offended against the laws, and cannot return to this country — at present — he —"

"Who is his accuser, sir?" demanded the poor girl, rising, and assuming an air of dignity.

"None of *your* friends, be assured," replied Pen, in a subdued tone of tenderness. "If you will be calm, I will endeavour to explain every thing, to your satisfaction."

She was silent, and resuming her seat, fixed her eyes upon our hero's face, as if to ascertain his sincerity. — He proceeded to state, that her lover having, in his mistaken zeal, adventured too far in some political cabals, had incurred the censure of government, and been compelled for the present, to seek refuge in a foreign land. —

She anxiously listened, without interrupting

his narrative, and Pen,—inferring from this awakened state of her attention, that the fairest opportunity presented itself, of opening to her such parts of her seducer's history as were immediately connected with her own,—he proceeded, in the most cautious manner, to trace it out from the moment, of his first interview with her. Her eye became more animated and distended as he advanced. He hinted at the assumption of a name, not his own. He repented it, for her eye fell:—he paused—she again looked up; but with a countenance of woe, that effectually checked his proceeding.—"Go on, sir," she faintly whispered.

"Nay," answered Pen, "it is better perhaps, to postpone any further conversation for the present; you are weak, you had better take some repose, and I—"

"Repose, sir," cried she, with a more than usually reproachful expression, of countenance. "Repose, sir, when you have robbed me of it FOR EVER."

"Oh, say not so, Rose,—I would console, I would—I come to make you happy, if you will hear me out."

She paused and seemed to be contending with

some internal emotion, —when suddenly turning to Pen, with a convulsed lip, she appeared to check herself, and then, in a half suppressed voice, said, " He then was a deceiver — from the beginning."

" Let us," cried Pen, in the tone of consolation — " let us look to brighter prospects."

" I do," cried she, with a firm voice, lifting up her streaming eyes towards heaven ; — then retiring within herself, she seemed to be wholly absorbed in her own reflections. — A glowing flush spread over her pale cheek, as she laid her hand upon that of Pen, which rested on the arm of her chair. — She raised her eyes towards her weeping mother : " Do not weep for *him*, mamma."

" I weep for you, my child," sobbed the wretched woman.

" Nay, do not, mamma, — you see I do not weep for myself, — and yet I am very, — very weak ;" then turning to Pen, she seemed to tax her utmost powers of exertion, to say something, which however died away, upon her lips. She struggled for utterance — the effort was at length successful. With an eye that spoke the resignation of every earthly hope, and with

a catching breath, — pressing the hand which trembled with emotion beneath her own, — she whispered, "Poor Rose then was the victim, of premeditated perfidy! — what a fallen creature am I!"

She seemed exhausted by the effort, and gently laid her head back, on the pillow.

Pen cast an eye upon the widow, whilst a tear of sympathy gleamed in it, as he signed to her to be silent, lest her daughter might be interrupted in her reverie, from which he hoped she might derive strength of mind, sufficient to listen with some composure to the alternatives, he now prepared himself, to lay before her. There was a long pause — poor Rose sighed — Pen's looks were directed towards the hand, which still rested on his own. He marked a slight convulsion. He felt it. — He looked up, but her face was turned from him. — He was suddenly assailed by an apprehension he dared not embody — much less utter.

"Gracious God!" exclaimed Mrs. Weston, rushing towards the chair. —

"What — what!" faulteringly exclaimed Pen, holding up his other hand to arrest her progress.

"She is dead — she is dead!" screamed the mother, and fell senseless at the feet of her child.

The child heeded her not, — answered her not. — Her spirit had, indeed, sunk under the conflict, — and had for ever flown!

Pen sat immovable: he dared not withdraw the hand, now grasped in his. — He felt he had murdered the being he came to save. — It was despair, — but it was passionless. He did not even turn his eyes towards her — he saw not her mother, at his feet. — Her hand grew colder and colder, — his heart grew chiller and chiller, — and the world and existence, seemed to be retreating before him!